

Dereham WaW Annual Public Meeting

20 April 2024

PRESENT

Dereham Walkers are Welcome Committee: Tim Birt, Catherine Hawkins, Ken Hawkins

Supporters: 17 others attended

1	<p>Welcome and introductions</p> <p>On behalf of Dereham Walkers are Welcome, Ken Hawkins welcomed all present. He introduced fellow committee members Tim Birt and Catherine Hawkins and thanked the other committee members and supporters unable to attend - Celia Macey, Sue Rothwell and Dorothy Sneesby (walk leaders), Carolyn Coleman and Sarah Eastes (Facebook) and Philip Morton, all of whom contributed to the workings of Dereham Walkers are Welcome.</p>
2	<p>Walkers are Welcome</p> <p>To set the context, Ken noted that Dereham was one of many towns accredited by the <i>Walkers are Welcome</i> national network. To achieve accreditation, we had had to show we met the 6 criteria for membership; we then had to demonstrate this every year through an Annual Return which was assessed by a mentor from another Walkers are Welcome town, in our case Derek Blake from Clare. Copies of the assessed report were distributed (and it would be put on to our website). Ken also noted that the primary purpose of Walkers are Welcome - to provide and assured warm welcome to anyone wanting to walk in Dereham - was supplemented by the secondary objective that walkers would then spend money in the town and so support the local economy. One way in which we did this, was by ending walks at a local café or similar.</p>
3	<p>Report on activity during 2023 and to date</p> <p>A brief outline of our activity during 2023 was given (walk leaflets and booklets produced and freely available / 12 monthly short walks run / 12 monthly Easy Tuesday walks / other, longer walks, some using the train or bus out of town, with a walk back / town walks as part of Heritage Open Days week / Ken acting as voluntary Community Access Warden for Dereham Town Council, with strong support from Cllr Philip Morton / some maintenance work undertaken).</p>
4	<p>Annual Accounts 1 January to 31 December 2023</p> <p>Copies of the independently examined accounts were distributed (again, will be uploaded to our website). The various items of income and expenditure were noted and explained, with the result that the year ended with about £70 more than when it started.</p> <p>It was noted that we needed to pay about £332 a year regardless of the level of activity.</p> <p>We had started the financial year with £2048 and ended with £2118. This was made up of £279 set aside for printing leaflets and booklets, £857 reserved for spending on the Neatherd, and a reserve of £400, leaving £582 free.</p>
5	<p>The future</p> <p>Comments and thoughts were invited on what we might do in the future. There was general approval for the walks programme and appreciation of the work done, directly or indirectly, to keep paths in good order. Specific suggestions made for consideration were (1) an evening walk in summer, (2) liaison with Norfolk Wildlife Trust, possible for a visit to Lolly Moor and (3) having more walks on Bank Holidays.</p>
6	<p>Committee</p> <p>Ken noted that we are still very much open to increasing the committee membership; if anybody new can join us they would be very welcome.</p>

All present were thanked for their attendance and their valuable contributions.