

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 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.

Town or village name	Dereham
Name of group or organisation	Dereham Walkers are Welcome
Population:	19,256
Source of population figure?	https://www.citypopulation.de/en/uk
Amount of payment due, see subscription population levels	£110
New Subscription paid	not yet
Date paid and how or date it will be paid	6 January 2025 by cheque
Name of mentor	??

Key to comment colours:	 Well done, criteria met.
	 Some concerns, your mentor will offer guidance and monitor progress.
	 Criteria not met.
Annual Return s expected	Overall Assessment
Excellent Annual Return and a great benefit to the community of Dereham. There is nothing I can add as you have everything under control. The work do mainly fall to a couple of people and that is usually the case in most groups so keep working on recruiting new members to lighten the load. As you are users of Facebook you understand that it is a useful source of getting information out to the community. Great reinstatement of a long ploughed out restricted byway, a feather in your cap and it demonstrates that the group is well respected with the local authorities. Please pass on our congratulations to the team for all the hard work they have done and continue to do. Many thanks. Helen Kenneally Temporary mentor	

Achievements & innovation this year Shout about your group's main achievements this year. Please include innovation and projects that go beyond the criteria that you are proud of.	This has again been a 'steady as she goes' year, continuing our previous level of activity across all fronts; though without any major new initiatives, we consider this a significant achievement. We have started trialling a very basic questionnaire to ascertain local spending by those who come on our walks.
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The six criteria are:	
1. Demonstrate popular local support from the community and local businesses for the concept Detail here how other groups or partners and residents you are working with have helped you to achieve your goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We continue to maintain good links with The Ramblers and Dereham U3A, the other main walking groups in the town We are an active part of aboutDereham, an umbrella group for community organisations, pressing for actions which enhance Dereham as an attractive destination During the year, the Dereham Action Partnership was established, bringing together local government, local businesses and community organisations under the leadership of our local MP and the town's rector; the WaW contribution to the work of this Partnership in pushing for the regeneration of the town is inevitably

	<p>small, but we're in there!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We again provided a stall at the <i>Dereham Day</i> event which brought in large numbers of residents and visitors • We have 214 people on our emailing list for information • We have a regular attendance on our walks - averaging about 10-15 on our Easy Tuesday walks and on our short walks (though largely different people) and often more on our longer walks; walkers are a mix of a slowly changing core of 'regulars' plus a good mix of new walkers • Some walks are linked to local businesses, eg the Partea Hut (café at Dereham Windmill) and the Mid-Norfolk Railway, with the Tuesday walks regularly ending at <i>The George</i> • We have continued our links with Dereham Heritage Trust, with which we have jointly produced town walk leaflets as well as jointly running Heritage Open Days town walks • We held our Annual Public Meeting, generating proposals which have been incorporated into our planning
<p>2. Demonstrate that the local council formally endorses the application for Walkers are Welcome status.</p> <p>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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The original supporting resolution of 2015 still stands • The DWaW Chair is also Community Access Warden (CAW) for Dereham Town Council, reporting formally to its Heritage and Open Spaces Committee 4 times a year; this role ensures continuing awareness by the Council of footpath issues, where DWaW can address problems both of 'ordinary' maintenance (eg vegetation growth and the like) and longer term issues requiring County Council action (eg the failure to enforce the use of a restricted byway) • A notable success this year has been the reinstatement of a long ploughed out restricted byway, following pressure from Dereham Walkers are Welcome and the action of the Town Council in setting aside funds to support legal action if necessary • Our link Town Councillor regularly participates in DWaW activities and has hosted refreshments in his (and his wife's) garden at the end of a walk
<p>3. Demonstrate a commitment that the local public path network will be maintained in good condition.</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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We undertake regular monitoring of all public rights of way and other public open space in the town • Minor issues (nettles, brambles, small fallen trees) are dealt with by WaW, bigger issues referred to the County Council; happily, there have been few problems to resolve this year • Longer standing issues have been raised with the Town Council, with follow up including County Councillors • We have pressed for the improvement of a restricted byway whose public use has been largely by walkers and a few cyclists, but whose private use for access to allotments has resulted in motor vehicles creating numerous potholes which fill with water after rain; the County Council declined to act without evidence as to which vehicles caused the damage (!), but the Town Council has now redirected its Parish Path Partnership funds to levelling and improving the byway
<p>4. Demonstrate that there is adequate marketing of the town's Walkers are Welcome status.</p> <p>This can be demonstrated in several</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are maintaining distribution of our short walks booklets and two town walk leaflets, which are also on our website; our original longer walks booklet remains available as a free download

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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stickers have again been distributed, concentrating on refreshment outlets • We continue to use Facebook and it has proved a regular source of people joining our walks • We have regular adverts in magazines in 12 villages round and about Dereham
5. Demonstrate how the town encourages the use of public transport. This can be demonstrated, for example, by including clear public transport advice on marketing leaflets or lobbying for improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The public transport available to reach Dereham is featured in our publicity materials • All walks start within reach of public transport • At least one walk each year is bus/train (heritage railway) out, walk back; in 2024 we did one by bus and one on the train • Half of the 14 walks leaflets are bus/train out, walk back
6. Demonstrate the mechanisms in place to maintain Walkers are Welcome status. This can be demonstrated through having a well-balanced and committed Walkers are Welcome steering group from within the community. Please list your current committee or organisation members and state how their roles support the group continuing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donations from those walking with us has continued to provide us a good income, allowing us to maintain a comfortable reserve of funds and to welcome anyone who wants to join us, whether or not they donate • Committee numbers have remained stable, though two share the leading of the Tuesday walks, another two look after our Facebook platform and one mainly looks after the website, so much of the planning falls to just 2 of us and we are always seeking new members • Current committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Tim Birt: website management ➢ Carolyn Coleman: Facebook ➢ Catherine Hawkins: Treasurer and Minutes Secretary ➢ Ken Hawkins: Chair and Secretary ➢ Becca Holland: Facebook ➢ Sue Rothwell: walk leader ➢ Dorothy Sneesby: walk leader • All the above also contribute ideas and participate in some or all of DWaW's work
Records Update – Website Profile 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.	Yes - it is checked regularly to ensure it remains accurate
Priorities 2025 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><i>We have only one entirely new plan but have plenty to do to continue and extend previous plans.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>New for 2025: an evening walk in conjunction with DTC and the Wildlife Trust to learn about the developing country park</i> <p><i>Updated from 2024:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Review three town walks booklets produced for use on Heritage Open Days to consider wider permanent publication: no progress made</i> • <i>Continue a regular programme of walks, one a month: exceeded, with monthly programmes of short walks and of Easy Tuesday walks for those needing good level surfaces, plus a number of other, longer, walks</i> • <i>HODs participation: we led one town walk (twice): achieved</i> • <i>WaW logos, refreshing logos at shops and businesses in the town: partly achieved</i> • <i>Production of a web map and descriptions of all public</i>

	<p><i>rights of way in Dereham: not achieved</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recruiting more people to the committee: partly achieved.</i> • <i>A report on all footpaths to Dereham Town Council: started but still in progress</i> • <i>Proposed guided walk led by a local landowner/farmer with interests in environmental issues: not achieved - the committee member offering this left</i> • <i>A new leaflet detailing our walks programme for the year, to attract a wider audience: achieved</i>
<p>National Executive Committee: 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. Please make your suggestions here.</p>	Our Chair is a member

Declaration

- We wish to apply for continued status as a Walkers are Welcome town/village.
- We will pay our annual subscription to Walkers are Welcome in January. (See separate invoice).

Name:	Ken Hawkins
Position:	Chair
E-mail:	ken-hawkins@tiscali.co.uk

THANK YOU

REMEMBER, WE ARE ALWAYS HERE TO HELP –

Please email the Secretary secretary@walkersarewelcome.org.uk or your Mentor for assistance at any time.

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