

Winchcombe Walkers are Welcome Newsletter July 2011

www.WinchcombeWelcomesWalkers.com



Winchcombe Cotswolds Walking Festival breaks all records....

The Winchcombe Walkers are Welcome Steering Group spent hundreds of hours planning and organising the second Winchcombe Walking Festival and are amazed at the popularity of this annual event. The Walking Festival attracted an increase of 44% more walkers, with over 280 walkers joining the many events.

The demand meant we had to put on extra walks and yet still had to turn some late enquirers away. A huge thank you for support from the Cotswold Voluntary Wardens and the Ramblers, together with the WI for providing pre-walk refreshments.

The walkers clocked up a staggering 2,180 miles, the same distance as London to Cairo as the crow flies! With 17 different themed walks on offer to suit everyone, the walks ranged from a short town military history walk, butterflies & flowers, steam train ride & walk, a family nature walk, to half day and full day walks. A new evening sunset walk was introduced which proved very popular.

It was nice to see local landowners and farmers being involved and talking about their animals and crops.

The festival attracted overseas visitors from USA, Australia and Slovakia, some through our website.



Launch of the new Winchcombe Way



On Abbey Terrace in front of a crowd of about 150 people and with the town brass band playing, Nick Hallissey, Deputy Editor of Country Walking magazine, cut the ribbon and launched the new 42 mile trail. The new Mayor of Tewkesbury, Dave Waters also made a speech.

Note:
2012
Walking festival
18-20 May



Above: Opening speech by Sheila Talbot, Chair of WWaW



Right: Chris Baxter, presenter on BBC Radio Gloucestershire wearing his new WWaW hat.

Winchcombe Way featured on BBC TV Midlands Today

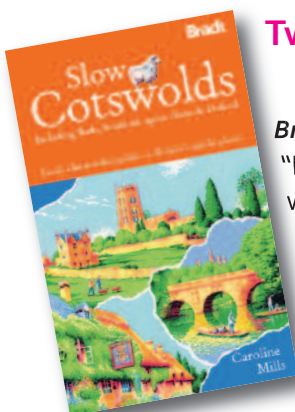
Bob Hockenhill from BBC TV spent several hours in and around Winchcombe filming a feature on the new trail. Filming took place in Vineyard St. Abbey Terrace, Cleeve Common, Dunns Hill, Little Farmcote, Cutsdean and Stanton.

The news article has resulted in many orders for the Winchcombe Way guidebook from as far afield as Bristol and Derby.



Winner of the Walking Festival Questionnaire Survey

Congratulations to Sue Hallam of Gotherington and a cheque for £25 is in the post.



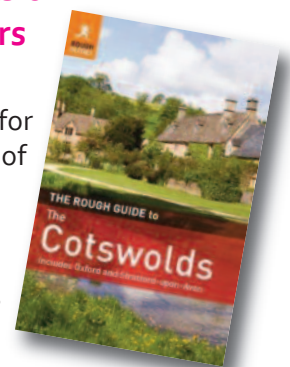
Two new guides to the Cotswolds acknowledge the efforts of WWaW to promote the town as a destination for walkers

Bradts

"In the north, the town of Winchcombe is keen to establish itself as a base for walkers and proud of its image as a working town without the trappings of being *too pretty*".

Rough Guide

"Winchcombe in particular has set itself up as 'walking capital of the Cotswolds'; its website Winchcombe Welcomes Walkers has loads of tips and links. Winchcombe is in easy reach of Broadway, Stow and Cheltenham, but far removed from all in pace and outlook".



The Cotswolds AONB application for the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism

Winchcombe has been playing a key role in helping the Cotswolds Conservation Board with its bid for the AONB to be internationally recognised for delivering a sustainable tourism industry.

The Conservation Board has made an application for the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas and, as part of the application process, a Charter verifier paid a visit to the Cotswolds, including Winchcombe, in April to meet some of the local people and businesses involved with tourism and see some good examples of sustainable tourism businesses and projects on the ground.

WWaW showcased Winchcombe, its shops and restaurants sourcing local produce; the WWaW Steering Group's efforts in attracting walkers to the town and local countryside; the Town Council's support with the TIC, signage and toilets; and the impact on the local economy.

At the end of the visit the verifier commented that what Winchcombe Walkers are Welcome has achieved in Winchcombe was terrific and felt that it would make an excellent case study for the European Charter network so that other areas across Europe could learn by our example.

She said: "The Cotswolds walking offer has significant potential to become a model to be used as an exemplar at a European level. A high quality network of promoted walking routes, including circular routes and long distance trails provides a very high quality experience for visitors. The Walkers are Welcome initiative in Winchcombe, including their forthcoming Walking Festival, is an outstanding example of effective cooperation between the Cotswold Voluntary Wardens, community representatives and local businesses and any opportunities should be taken to support, strengthen and expand this initiative."

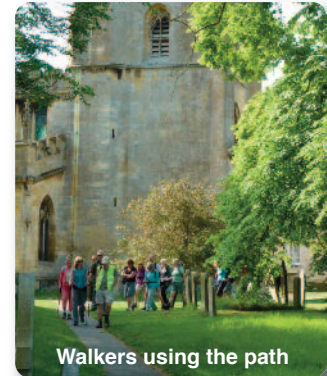


New footpaths

It is very rare to report one new footpath opening, but to announce three we reckon is unique and a testimony to the growing numbers of walkers.

St Peter's Churchyard

The vicar is encouraging people to use the permissive path through the churchyard to the playing field. Future plans are to create a hardsurface path to link up with the footpath to the play area and Back Lane, thereby creating access between the town and Langley Road area in all weathers.



Walkers using the path

Parks Farm

Groundworks are currently under way to divert the footpath adjacent to Sudeley Lodge and Parks Farm. Discussions between the Ramblers and landowners resulted in the creation of a new footpath down into the valley culminating in a new circular walk in the Sudeley valley. Further details on the progress will be announced on our website.

Sudeley Castle

Not many people are aware but Sudeley Castle has created a new right of way which runs from the exit of the car park to Sudeley holiday cottages adjacent to the road. This offers an alternative route back into the town avoiding the road.



The inaugural walk on the Winchcombe Way is featured in July's edition of Country Walking magazine.



Ten great new UK holidays for 2011

With a tavern every five miles, the brand new 42-mile Winchcombe Way might almost be viewed as a very energetic pub crawl. A cleverly devised figure-of-eight route centred on the attractive small town of Winchcombe, the walk takes in some lesser-trodden glories of the north Cotswolds. There's oodles of accommodation along the way, from hotels to humble campsites, but finish at 17th-century Woodstanway Farmhouse and you can ease aching limbs (or heads) in a Jacuzzi.

• winchcombewelcomeswalkers.com; [Woodstanway Farmhouse](http://WoodstanwayFarmhouse) (01386 584318, woodstanwayfarmhouse.co.uk)



Missing waymarkers

Waymarkers for the new trail are being vandalised in the Stanton and Wood Stanway area. A walker recently delivered ten signs to the Winchcombe TIC he found under a log. Despite replacing them some have been removed a second time within a week!

The new trail is designed to bring much needed custom to the local pubs, B&Bs, tea shops (who fully support the trail) and the knock on effect to the local economy. If you see any signs missing please let us know or Gloucestershire County Council's Rights of Way team.

New Visitors' Information Board

WWaW have worked with the Town Council to design and erect a new information board in Abbey Terrace to help visitors find their way around the town and locate nearby places to visit. The board has been professionally designed and produced for outdoor durability. The cost was met by grants from the National Grid and the Cotswolds AONB Voluntary Wardens' Countryside Fund.

