

MARKET TOWN AWARDS 2007

MARKET TOWN: HEBDEN BRIDGE

PROJECT NAME: HEBDEN BRIDGE: BRITAIN'S FIRST *WALKERS ARE WELCOME* COMMUNITY

Partners: Hebden Bridge Walkers Are Welcome Advisory Board and Hebden Bridge Walkers Action with support from Hebden Royd Town Council, Erringden, Heptonstall and Blackshaw Parish Councils, Calderdale MBC, Northern Rail, Calderdale Ramblers' Association and Alternative Technology Centre

Category: Partnership and Strategic Working

Hebden Bridge created the concept of the *Walkers are Welcome* town and launched the 'brand' in February, 2007. *Walkers are Welcome* has been established with a set of six challenging but achievable criteria, to ensure protection of the 'brand' and maintenance of quality.



Hebden Bridge Walkers' Action first developed the concept of *Walkers are Welcome* towns in Autumn 2006. The idea has two aims: to strengthen a town's reputation as a place to come for walking, bringing useful benefits for the local economy, and to encourage local people to get out walking.

In September 2006, 300 people signed the petition which sought community support for the initiative. Subsequently financial support has come from a wide range of public and private sources, including Awards for All; the scheme has been endorsed by the town

council; many shops have taken *Walkers are Welcome* window stickers; many people attended the Walkers' Day festival with workshops, stalls and guided walks; Northern Rail trains have also taken window stickers; and Moffat and Prestatyn have been advised about becoming *Walkers are Welcome* towns.

Future developments will include 'Adopt a Path' (individuals/youth organisations); a 'lost paths' project; and a 'Gentle Walking' health related initiative. Furthermore, an Advisory Board has been created to oversee the project's long-term development.



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