

Isle of Wight AONB Winter Welcome Walks Report 2022 / 23

Kathy Grogan
01.03.23



A Winter Walks programme

The decision was made, at a meeting of walk leaders and AONB staff at The Galleybagger, Chillerton on 20.09.22, to schedule and deliver a programme of Winter walks following two successful Summer programmes in 2021 and 2022. The walks would be funded through the Interreg Project, UNESCO Sites across the Channel. It was agreed that each of the four walk leaders would run four walks on the same terms and conditions as the Summer programmes. Kelly Wetherick, who had taken over from Spencer Brown as Education Officer for Brading Roman Villa, was keen to continue to offer History-themed walks. The group also discussed the possibility of a team event, possibly in Spring / Summer 2023, with walks from a central hub where activities for children and other non-walkers could be stationed. The idea of walks that start and finish at school gates, which parents could take advantage of after dropping children at school and before picking them up, was discussed and it was agreed to trial these during the Winter programme 22/23.

Date	Walk title	Walk leader	Tickets	Bookings	Attended
26.11.22	Autumn Earth Walk	Kathy Grogan	25	15	11
07.12.22	Brading landscape Walk	Kelly Wetherick	15	14	9
08.12.22	Full Moon Walk	Chris & Frankie	25	9	4
10.12.22	Getting Crafty for Christmas	Kathy Grogan	25	25	12
21.12.22	Solstice Stomp	Chris & Frankie	25	19	7
27.12.22	Blow away the cobwebs Xmas Walk	Sue Bailey	15	15	12
05.01.23	Twelfth Night by Day	Chris & Frankie	25	22	14
11.01.23	West Wight School Gates	Chris & Frankie	25	8	6
15.01.23	Thorness Bay Low Tide Walk	Sue Bailey	15	15	16
22.01.23	Playful Coastal Creations	Kathy Grogan	25	25	22
26.01.23	The Archaeology of Brading Marshes	Kelly Wetherick	15	15	2
29.01.23	Seascapes, Slopes & a Chimney!	Sue Bailey	15	14	12
02.02.23	East Wight School Gates Walk	Kelly Wetherick	15	4	2
09.02.23	Roman Bowcombe	Kelly Wetherick	15	15	10
12.02.23	Mythical Beasts Story Walk	Sue Bailey	15	15	2
15.02.23	West Wight Wild Play	Kathy Grogan	30	30	21
Average group size per walk is 10.2 people.			TOTALS	325	260
				260	162

Advertising

Once the walks had been agreed, the co-ordinator uploaded the programme onto the IW AONB Eventbrite account and advertised it in a range of local Facebook groups on 4th November. The facebook posts were greeted with enthusiasm and by 7th November, we had already taken 94 bookings and two walks (both Sue Bailey's story walks) were already sold out! Walk leaders and the AONB team also shared information on their own social media platforms.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/manage/collections/1354089/events>

Local Facebook groups:

- Isle of Wight Walking L 130 S 0
- Isle of Wight Wild Learning L 116 S 12
- Isle of Wight What's On and Events L 4 S 1
- Isle of Wight Environmental Hub Discussion Group L2
- Kids Clubs and Activities Isle of Wight L 3 S 0
- Isle of Wight Newbies Events L 3 S 0
- West Wight Wild L 5 S 2
- Isle of Wight Mums L 1 S
- West Wight Parents L 2 S

Facebook business pages: (L: Likes; S: Shares)

- Kathy Grogan Learning Wild L181 S52
- But That's Another Story L11 S1
- Chris and Frankie L168 S12
- Isle of Wight AONB Partnership L58 S36

TOTAL: Likes: 684 Shares: 116

Total reached via IW Wild Learning: 7.975.



Fancy some good news? The Isle of Wight's fabulous AONB team has funded some more Welcome Walks this Winter, celebrating the Isle of Wight UNESCO Biosphere - and they're all FREE! I'm delighted to be part of the team of Walk Leaders, who are all offering something different to suit families as well as individuals. Kelly from Brading Roman Villa will be leading walks with a focus on the Island's rich history and heritage; Chris & Frankie are back to lead the 5-6 milers, mostly for adults, celebrating culture, dark skies and taking in some of the Island's fabulous landscapes; Sue the story-teller has some new and old tales to tell and some hidden heritage to share; and Kathy's walks offer playful adventures in wild places for children and families. We've tried to enable busy parents to take part, with a couple of walks scheduled to start at school drop-off times from the school gates. Please browse through and see if anything lights your candle. Welcome Walks are FREE but places are limited, so don't forget to book your place!

#iwbiospherereserve #isleofwightbiosphere
#isleofwightaonb #iwaonb
#isleofwightwalking
<https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/isle-of-wight-aonb-winter-welcome-walks-1354089>



Walk descriptions with plenty of detail seemed to get more interest than those with general descriptions. For example, Sue's walks, with descriptions full of landscape details and talk of tales to be told, booked out quickest and those from Brading Roman Villa, which had more general descriptions, (this was only to be expected as Kelly was new to the post) had fewest. However, it should be noted that fully booked sessions didn't always result in the same number turning up on the day. Some walkers were unhappy with the weather on inclement days and some left walks early because they hadn't read the walk description and found it to be unsuitable. This accounted for the lower scoring on some of the postcards. On the whole, however, the walks were popular with those that came and many made bookings for several walks, often with the same walk leader. For the final walk in the programme, I increased the

number of tickets available from 20 to 30 in response to the many requests on social media from people who were disappointed that bookings were full. 21 people actually came on the day.

Feedback

Feedback postcards were again handed out to walkers to complete at the end of each walk.

Number of postcards in the random sample	33
Number completed by locals	30
Number completed by visitors	2
Number who would do the walk again without a leader	31
Score: 1 out of 5	0
Score: 2 out of 5	0
Score: 3 out of 5	0
Score: 4 out of 5	1
Score: 5 out of 5	31
Positive comments	31
Criticisms	1

Examples of comments from postcards

"Brilliant views and leaders!"

"I really enjoyed this. Chris and Frankie are amazing and very informative and friendly. I look forward to my next walk".

"It was lots of fun and we found a new walk! Thank you"

"Great venue, good length of walk, very knowledgeable walk leader. Really enjoyed it".

"Great games, good pace, great atmosphere"

"We loved it! Thank you so much"

"Would be nice to have activities for teenagers"

[This was a walk advertised with activities aimed at children from 4 – 10]

"Thoroughly enjoyed every minute. Perfect for all children and adults with a sense of fun!"



Gallery

