

Official Launch of  
**Chesham**  
**“Walkers Are Welcome”**

Part of Heritage Open Weekend 2010 so free to all!

**Saturday 11th September – 9.30am**

A historical 9 mile walk to follow part of the route of the proposed but never built Manchester to Paris Railway. Meet at the Museum at 9.30am for onward travel to the start. Limited to 20 places so pre-booking advised. Please contact 01494 792549 or email to; [info@cheshammuseum.org.uk](mailto:info@cheshammuseum.org.uk) to book a place

**Sunday 12th September – 2.00pm**

Brief opening ceremony and information stall. Choice of three walks;

- + ‘Chesham Heritage’ short town walk (2miles)
- + ‘Chesham Bois’ medium walk (4miles)
- + ‘Ley Hill’ longer walk (5miles)

The walks will be open to all and start from the Museum immediately after the ceremony.

For details:

Call Phil Folly on 01494 783691 or Andrew Clark on 01494 783035 or go to [www.chesham.gov.uk/Walks/Chesham\\_Walks.aspx](http://www.chesham.gov.uk/Walks/Chesham_Walks.aspx)

# Chesham says “Walkers Are Welcome”

Chesham, an historic place mentioned in the Domesday Book, was granted status as a *Walkers Are Welcome* town in March 2010 and is the first township of medium size near to London to receive this prestigious status. It nestles amongst beautiful valleys, has unique natural features such as the chalk stream River Chess and is adjacent to the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Chesham is an interesting place and we want to encourage visitor walkers to share its attractions with us.

**How Chesham gained its ‘Walkers Are Welcome’ accreditation.** The town had to show...

**Popular local support:** A petition was signed by over 500 local residents.

**Action to ensure that facilities for walkers are maintained in good condition:** Chesham “Walkers Are Welcome” are currently surveying all local footpaths on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council to assist in the maintenance programme

**Adequate marketing:** Six walks leaflets are already available from various locations in the town. Plans to install signage from Chesham Station and the Water Meadow Car Park are underway. Events and self-guided walks to be featured in *The Examiner* and *Bucks Free Press* newspapers, *Your Chesham* and *Town Talk* local magazines.

**Encouragement of walking using public transport:** As well as liaising with transport providers such as the Chiltern District Council, public transport advice will appear on marketing leaflets.

**Mechanisms to maintain Walkers are Welcome status:** A *Walkers Are Welcome Group* has been established including representatives of councils, local and national walking groups.

## **Who is Walkers Are Welcome for?**

Walking can be enjoyed by all, whether in the countryside or just around town. The *Walkers are Welcome Group*, with help from its partners, is promoting a full range of existing walks and new walks from Chesham town suitable for families, wheelchair users as well as more experienced hikers.

## **Walkers already visit – why does Chesham need Walkers Are Welcome?**

Many people come to and pass through the town, on their way to many footpaths including the Chiltern Heritage Trail and Chess Valley Walk. A number of shorter ones including town walks may be of interest to visitors. Visitors to the Chiltern Way, for example, may be unaware of all that Chesham has to offer – library, a new museum, a wide range of shops, pubs, eateries – places to buy maps, walking gear, a meal, or just a cup of coffee. For weekend hikers, some ‘B&B’s and hotels are available. *The Walkers Are Welcome Group* will help to coordinate and promote these services. Outlets will display the *Walkers Are Welcome* logo and issue information about walks.

**Chesham Walkers Are Welcome - Partner Groups:** Chesham Environmental Group, The Chiltern Society, The Ramblers, Simply Walks. **Supported by:** Chesham Town Council, Chiltern District Council, Bucks County Council, Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

See our website: [http://www.chesham.gov.uk/Walks/Chesham\\_Walks.aspx](http://www.chesham.gov.uk/Walks/Chesham_Walks.aspx)

*Letter of support from Julia Bradbury, well known television personality and advocate of walking*

It gives me the greatest delight to welcome Chesham as one of the newest recruits to the ever-growing Walkers Are Welcome family. It's a real cause for celebration, that one more enlightened town is really reaching out to get people on their feet and explore all this beautiful country has to offer.

The Walkers Are Welcome Scheme is a truly innovative project. It's such a simple concept; set up an accreditation scheme for walk-friendly towns, then encourage the towns to network together for support, advice and ideas.

That simplicity has led to jaw dropping success; 47 towns and villages have signed up to the scheme in just three years. This is partly due to the unique grass-roots way that the scheme is proposed, then set up, in the towns – it involves all the local community and leads, of course, to the community really engaging and welcoming the walkers that they attract as a consequence. More broadly, it shows that people genuinely love welcoming walkers to their 'homes'; to show off what lies on their back doorstep, to share the pleasures people themselves feel from walking, and also because walkers make the perfect guests!

Chesham, set in the mouthwatering, quintessentially English Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, is right to be proud of its walking heritage. Chesham's achievement in becoming a Walkers are Welcome town is doubly valuable, as it is well placed to help attract city folk out of London and into the countryside, too.

Walking is just about the healthiest, accessible and most fun activity there is. Chesham deserves full congratulations for encouraging as many people as possible – from hardy hikers to newer walkers – to love walking too.

Julia Bradbury  
President of the Ramblers