



THE ICKNIELD WAY ASSOCIATION

Report on the Great Chalk Way Project for the Icknield Way Association Annual General meeting of 2022

Tom Chevalier, Clive Beckett, and myself have continued to represent the IWA on the GCW project group, and successfully presented a case for supporting the project to the Bedfordshire Local Access Forum earlier this year. We have plans to do the same for each LAF along the IW.

The information board is close to agreement and completion, some siting's for such have been agreed and others are being investigated, and we have submitted images from Royston Cave (Cambridgeshire/Hertfordshire border) and West Stow Anglo Saxon Village (Suffolk/ Norfolk border) for inclusion on the board, as these are of particularly historic and highly relevant places along the route. It has also been suggested by the Chair of the GCW group that an image of Grime's Graves is included on the board, as this is the singular most important place in connection to the GCW, although it is not on the direct routes of the current IW or Peddars Way paths. This has yet to be discussed by the IWA.

Bill Bailey (actor, comedian, celebrity dancer, musician and writer) has agreed to be the President of the GCW, having knowledge of it and being a regular walker of the IW and Ridgeway.

The launch of the GCW will take place at the Dunstable Downs Visitor Centre either next year or in 2024. The reason it may not take place next year is due to both the Friends of the Ridgeway and the IWA having their own 40th Anniversary celebrations next year, as well as the 50th Anniversary of the Ridgeway National Trail celebrations taking place in September next year, and we would not wish any prospective publicity arrangements to clash with each other or the GCW launch. We also need to be mindful of any launch of the new Wainwright Coast to Coast national trail.

It has also been agreed that no guidebook of the GCW path will be produced until the entire set of paths (Wessex Ridgeway, Ridgeway, Icknield Way, and Peddars Way are all National Trails). With this in mind, the launch of the GCW may help us in achieving this – the main objective of the IWA.

Doug Landman
22nd Sept 2022