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ewelcome

an electronic bulletin from
Tourism Partnership North Wales

Walkers take mobile phone technology in their stride

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Walkers take mobile phone technology in their stride

Tourism chiefs are tapping into mobile phone technology to provide virtual guidebooks for walkers in North Wales.

Delegates at a special forum organised by Tourism Partnership North Wales heard that the so-called eTrails could help create a path to prosperity for the region.

Tourism Partnership are pumping £25,000 into their Walking North Wales campaign and it's expected to generate ten times that in spending by visitors.

They believe it's a market with vast potential. Walking is three times as popular as swimming, its nearest competitor among physical activities, with 44.5 per cent of adults regularly enjoying a walk of more than two miles.

The forum was held at the Glasdir Centre, in Llanrwst, where Peter Hewlett, from Walking North Wales, was a keynote speaker.

Mr Hewlett said: "There is a great deal going on including the ongoing work on the Wales Coast Path.

"We are organising new and exciting walking festivals and embracing and developing the relatively new, and increasingly popular, Nordic Walking.

"However, there are many other areas of activity including the introduction of new eTrails where all a walker needs is a mobile phone to access information on landmarks and geographical features as they progress along a particular walk.

"I believe we are winning the battle but we must continue using every avenue at our disposal to help get our message across that there is nowhere more welcoming, beautiful nor diverse as North Wales in which to enjoy walking and hiking."

Dewi Davies the Regional Strategy Director of Tourism Partnership North Wales, the body responsible for the strategic development of the visitor economy in North Wales, said: "Peter Hewlett and his colleague Simon Logan of Walking North Wales are doing a fantastic job and are simply champions of all things walking across the region.

"We should never underestimate the economic importance of walking to the North Wales economy.

"We have to engage with all walkers, whether serious hikers or a family looking for a leisurely stroll along the coast or on a hill or mountain.

"North Wales has so much to offer walkers and it



Pictured from left is Peter Hewlett, walking North Wales, John Ablitt, Snowdonia National park authority, Simon Logan, walking North Wales and Dewi Davies regional strategy director for TPNW.



is important we engage with them and provide a sustainable business plan to develop walking as a leisure pursuit for the future.”

Peter Hewlett (pictured above) went on to outline plans for this year’s walking festivals in North Wales.

He said: “There are numerous walking events and festivals taking place right across North Wales, the majority of which are guided by professional, knowledgeable guides who will help visitors get the most out of their experience.

“Some events such as June’s Anglesey Walking Festival will offer the opportunity to spend evenings in the company of local historians, and a chance to dine on local Welsh produce.

Refreshments will be available in most places and some will also include visits to local businesses.”

He added: “Snowdonia’s majestic rugged beauty and Betws-y-Coed’s stunning scenery, with its emerald forests and fast flowing river, makes for a natural base for walking but there are walks to be enjoyed right across North Wales, all offering something different.”

The forum also heard from The Countryside Council for Wales’ Quentin Grimley who informed delegates of the progress made on building the Wales Coast Path.

He said: “In 2006 the Welsh Assembly Government decreed that they wanted to see a Wales Coast Path giving access to every inch,

where possible, of the coast right around Wales.

“That path is due for completion by 2012. However, although some parts of the path clearly already existed around Wales, the first fully new section, between Gronant and Llandudno, will open to the public on 1st July this year.

“This will give a real boost to North Wales and will, I’m sure, attract many new walkers to the region keen to walk all or some of the 26-mile section.”

For more information call 01758 760532 or go to www.walkingnorthwales.co.uk or www.tpnw.org

