

Subject: Slow Ways - great to promote for exercise and economy development in our area

Hi Linda, Norma, Alan, Sam, Ryan and Matthew

I'd like to draw your attention to the new walking routes network, Slow Ways. A new network set up by volunteers, who've documented over 7000 walking routes across the country between settlements. All the routes are encouraging people to walk from A to B avoiding busy roads; and instead following footpaths surrounded by greenery and tranquility. They are 'slow' rather than fast, and slow in how they help your mind calm its pace.

The idea behind them is to encourage walking, reduce use of cars and resultant emissions, and help individuals' physical and mental well-being. A knock-on benefit is that because the routes are between settlements with amenities, accommodation, transport links is that through promotion of the Slow Ways walking routes, a community can stimulate numerous benefits, including economic, as the walks will attract visitors.

The network has recently launched and individuals are being asked to review the routes.

Today I walked my first Slow Way, the one from Tadcaster to Garforth via Aberford, a fabulous, gorgeously green 9-mile route.

As you'll see on the website there are numerous Slow Ways from:

- Wetherby (8 routes <https://beta.slowways.org/Place/wetherby>)
- Harewood (6 routes <https://beta.slowways.org/Settlement/Harewood>)
- Bardsey (4 routes <https://beta.slowways.org/Settlement/Bardsey>)
- Barwick (5 routes <https://beta.slowways.org/Settlement/Barwick%20in%20Elmet>)

Many routes pass through other villages in the Wetherby and Harewood wards.

I am not connected to the Slow Ways team, I simply think it is a marvellous idea. In lockdown so many people got out walking, increased their appreciation of nature and its positive impact on their mental health, so I think the launch of this new walking route network is wonderful. Plus, I think the potential environmental benefits of increasing walking, increasing opportunity to use public transport on return leg, and reducing car use, with the knock on positive impact for climate emission reduction is so valuable. The idea of walking between settlements is so in line with the concept of active travel between neighbourhoods.

Slow Ways is seeking to encourage local town and parish councils to support, promote and build on this walking network within their communities.

<https://beta.slowways.org/Page/get-involved#councils>

Therefore, I wondered if I could please ask you to considering looking into this new walking network, and proactively encouraging all town and parish councils in your wards to support and promote them, encourage residents to walk them - and to link them into their economic development, public transport and health and well-being decisions and strategies.

I think there is also a wider and significant city benefit to promoting these walking routes (there are so so many across our city region) for Leeds City Council - by linking into their Connecting Leeds, Active Well-being, Climate Emergency, and Economic & Tourism Development strategies. Can I please ask you to promote Slow Ways to your relevant city councillors and officers. I'm happy to be a resident endorser and be involved in any discussions.

I truly believe Slow Ways is a wonderful concept; and one our community with 'all our two feet' should support and engage in!

Any questions, please ask, and I hope you too can recognise all the new potential positive benefits of Slow Ways.

Kind regards
Georgina Mills, Bramham resident