

Overall this has been a very good year. Membership has dropped marginally, but the number of active members has increased, as seen by the walk report summaries.

I believe that we have the widest and most comprehensive walks programme in the country, with a total of 350 walks.

Also, I have not seen a better website than ours.

We now have 5 different all day walks, as well as a selection of morning walks catering for a wide range of needs, from 4 mile leisurely strolls, to 14 mile strenuous hikes.

This would not be possible without the efforts of the walk organisers, supported by the leaders, all brilliantly coordinated by our two skilled IT operators.

I have been very lucky to have the backing of a committee of very capable and industrious individuals. They have all used their initiative to improve their particular activity.

I am pleased to say that our funds are now in a healthier state. The main fund has been built up, and the coach fund is now strong enough to survive a disaster, thanks to us now having a financially astute coach secretary.

Regrettably our operation is becoming bogged down by the pedantic bureaucracy of head office. This is having a negative effect on the number of walk leaders, who represent the core of our organisation. We are trying to assist members work their way through the website training routine. Whilst the training course contains a lot of useful information, we are getting a negative reaction from some who feel they are being forced into doing it. I get comments along the lines of 'our subscriptions are being spent by deskbound nerds who are telling volunteers what to do!'

Also, communications both with HQ and the area leave a lot to be desired. Neither HQ nor the area show us the courtesy of keeping us informed on all the important issues. For example, why were we not told that members of Boundless have free access to our walks? Messages come down infrequently, but little gets passed upwards. It seems that this charity is operating like a top down PLC.

I am afraid that I am powerless to do anything about it, apart from venting my feelings to whoever from HQ attends the area AGM next January.

As I am getting long in the tooth, I only intend to stand as chairman for one more year.

Mike Goodrich

November 2025