

**Footloose  
Walking Club**

*Walking in  
Lakeland since  
1999*

# Newsletter

**February 2026**

## **1. Welcome to the latest Footloose news letter.**

Welcome to our first Newsletter for 2026. As usual at this time of year we lose a few members who decide not to renew their membership, but we also gain quite a few due to New Year resolutions to get fit or make new friends. Whatever the reason, we would like to extend a warm welcome to all our new members.

## **2. The Walking Programme**

We seem to have suffered a wet start to 2026, however we have also seen some very large turnouts when we have had good weather. Cliff and Isobel were rather taken aback when 36 people turned up for their walk on the 4th of January. Eventually they had to split the group as that number of walkers was making progress too slow at stiles and other bottlenecks. It is suspected that this number is a record for Footloose. In contrast, the following week's walk had just 5 people as the weather was wet and very cold.

James House has successfully taken over the walks coordinator role, with a seamless transfer from Simon Hughes. Since taking over, James has been looking at improving the process for submitting walks. He has set up an e-mail address solely for submitting walks, and he has also put in place a system for uploading walks directly to the spreadsheet. This new e-mail address for submitting walks is [footloose.walklakes@gmail.com](mailto:footloose.walklakes@gmail.com) If you don't want to use these new systems, it is still possible to submit walks at the planning meetings as we have always done.

We now have walks offered for every week in the next quarter, ie April - June. Many thanks for those who have offered to lead - it is much appreciated.

If anyone still wants to lead a walk, we can plan an easy walk alongside a harder one. Let James know if you can help with this. If you fancy leading a shorter walk there is always the option of an evening walk in the summer. It is difficult to think about evening walks when it is going dark by 6 o'clock but summer time is just around the corner.

James is already taking reservations for dates in the summer (July - September).

## **3. Forthcoming events**

- Summer Social

We are looking at various ideas for the summer social at the moment. These include an archery session, a film night, an outdoor theatre trip, a canal boat ride, and 10 pin bowling. If you have a view on what you would prefer, or can suggest something different, please let one of the committee members know. The favourite proposal at the moment is for 10 pin Bowling in Morecambe followed by a meal at the iconic Midland Hotel.

- Autumn 2026 Holiday

We are starting to pull some ideas together for our usual short autumn break. Llandudno has been suggested a number of times but has always been rejected as there is very limited walking nearby. It is always good to be able to do some walks directly from the accommodation. Betws-y-Coed has been suggested as there is plenty of good walking from there but it is felt that the drive from Cumbria would be too long.

The favoured area that is being looked at in more detail for this year is Yorkshire, such as Richmond or Ripon. If anyone has any experiences in this area and can provide advice, the committee would love to hear from you.

- Autumn Hard Holiday (Spanish Trek)

The organisation of the September trekking holiday along the NW coast of Spain is progressing well. It must be pointed out that this is fully booked. Transport options have been finalised although we are having to travel via Gatwick on the way out. The plan is to include two nights in Madrid on the return to give us the opportunity to visit that city and also to enable us to fly back directly to Manchester.

- Christmas Meal and AGM

Although it is too early to obtain menus, prices, and make bookings, we need to start looking for a suitable venue for our Christmas Meal and AGM. We try to alternate between the east and west areas of South Cumbria but following the closure of the Old Mill at Bardsea we are lacking a venue in the west. The venue has to have a room we can have to ourselves that can hold 35 - 40 people. If anyone has any suggestions they will be gratefully received. At the moment we are investigating the hotels in Grange-over-Sands.

#### **4. Website and Photographs**

An issue came up recently where a photograph from a Footloose walk was printed in the Westmoreland Gazette. This has highlighted the need for clearer guidelines regarding the use of photographs both inside and outside Footloose.

After some discussion the following guidelines have been agreed:

- Where Footloose photos that include members are put on our website and/or social media (eg WhatsApp), no approval is needed. If a member has a reasonable objection to a photograph that includes them appearing on our website or social media, then that photograph can subsequently be deleted. The default position is that photographs that include members can go on the Footloose website and/or social media without approval. Members who do not want any photographs that include them to be shown on our website, they can opt out on the membership form but they need to be aware that this does result in considerable extra work for our website manager.
- Where a photo taken at a Footloose event is to be used in a publication external to Footloose, especially a commercial publication, then members who are identifiable in that photo should be contacted in advance for approval. This is not a legal requirement, but a matter of courtesy. Photos put in publications cannot be retracted.

Our website is a great place to display our photographs and we want to keep doing so. Please keep supplying your photographs as they are very useful.

## **5. Planning and Social Meetings**

We have just had another successful Planning and Social meeting at the Stan Laurel in Ulverston. Once again we have found them to be extremely helpful, better than most other places. The next meeting will be arranged for May and we are currently looking at going back to the Manor Pub at Oxon Park. If anyone has any alternative suggestions please let the committee know.

We are very grateful to Helen House for organising these meetings,

## **6. Kirkstone Pass**

Please note that the Kirkstone Pass remains closed due to a landslip. This means that we need to be wary of organising walks in the Ulswater area. It is still possible to get to Ulswater via the Struggle out of Ambleside but many members might prefer to avoid this route especially as it could be much busier than normal.

## **7. Dogs**

We are now entering the lambing season and all our dog owners need to be aware that there is a legal requirement to have all dogs on a lead on open access land between 1st March and 31st July. This applies even when there is no livestock present.

We have had some instances where we have had dogs push past people on narrow paths which risks tripping them up. It is important that dog owners ensure that this does not happen by keeping their dogs under control, and if necessary put their dogs on a lead.

## **8. Mountain Rescue Donation**

At the AGM we held a raffle in aid of Mountain Rescue, and this was donated to the Duddon Team. We have received a lovely reply thanking us for this and offering to do a presentation to us. For quite a few years we invited a local charitable organisation to do a presentation in exchange for a donation at the AGM. There is general agreement that some form of gift to a relevant charity is worthwhile, either from a raffle or a donation from club funds, but we need to decide whether we want to have presentation as this reduces the time available for socialising. It would be interesting to hear members views.

## **9. Comments, observations, complaints?**

If you have any items of news which you would like to be included in future newsletters please contact the chair. The contact is [footloose.cumbria@gmail.com](mailto:footloose.cumbria@gmail.com)

Happy Walking  
John Davies - Chair