

Mid Lancashire Area Walk Statistics Oct 2015-June 2023

We are all aware that our walking programmes have been impacted by covid.
Many of our walk programmes are reduced and or more inconsistent.
There is a reduction in the number of leaders available which impacts the programmes.
However, the changes are not all directly due to covid.
Changes on leader guidance led some leaders to opt out of leading.
Some members have continued with small private groups that set up during covid.
And there is competition from other local groups or Meetup groups.

To understand the changes, we (Eric with substantial help from Joy) have analysed the last 7 years of walk data, mostly from our printed programmes.

There are some oddities as walks that were planned pre covid but cancelled due to covid are still included.
Should be minor impact.

This analysis was partly triggered by anecdotal evidence that our walks were becoming shorter and slower.

From the data what we can tell is that: -

- Pre covid, our overall average walk distance was reducing.
- Post covid, some groups have increased their average distance and grade
- Some groups have continued to slowly decrease their average distance.
- Garstang group was finally killed by covid though it had been on a serious decline beforehand.

Anecdotally, where groups maintained enough leaders their walk pattern returned to previous pattern.

Where availability of leaders became a constraint, the walk patterns became inconsistent.

Also, anecdotally it is certainly true that more older leaders disappeared, perhaps because of covid, leaving perhaps stronger leaders which is reflected in increased average grade level post covid.

If you want to know the situation with your group, see further down.

But first some overall figures for Mid Lancs Area.

Key Information.

The data is mainly from the historic 4-month paper programmes and data dumps from the last programme to mid 23 when the walk management system was replaced.

HOL and LWW are not included in these figures as they did not exist in the paper programmes.

There are 4 distinct periods. Oct14-Jan17, Jan17-Jan20, covid feb20-end 21, Jan22-Jun 23

A. Statistics for the whole of Mid Lancs (no HOL, LWW data)

Average Walk Length.

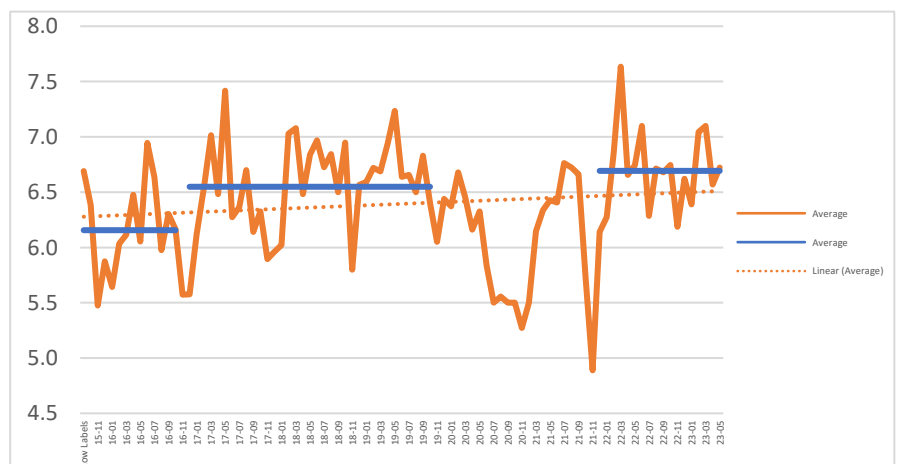
There was an increase from Oct15 to Jan17 with an average of 6.2 miles.

From then to Jan20 it then held steady around 6.5 mile.

Within the groups, some were decreasing, some increasing.

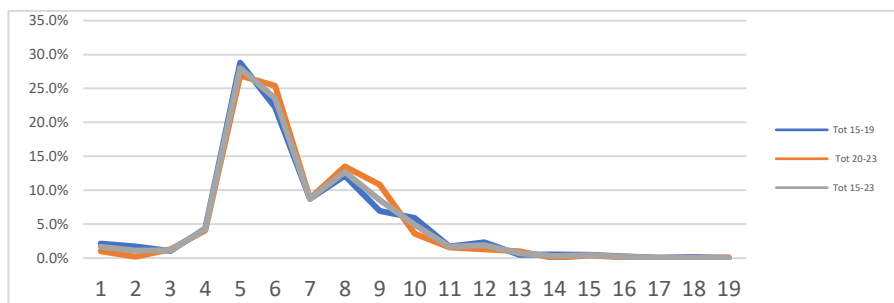
During covid times the averages were chaotic. However, in the last 18 months the average is slightly higher at about 6.7 mile.

The difference pre an post covid is due to more 8 mile walks and less 5 mile walks.



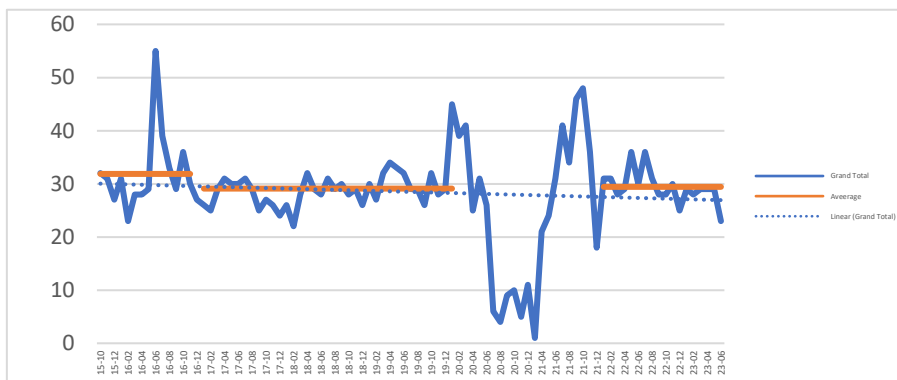
Most Common Walk Length.

The dominant walk length is around 5 miles with the second most common being about 8 miles. But since covid, 5 mile walks have dropped from 28.8% to 26.9% and 8 mile walks increased 12.1% to 13.5%



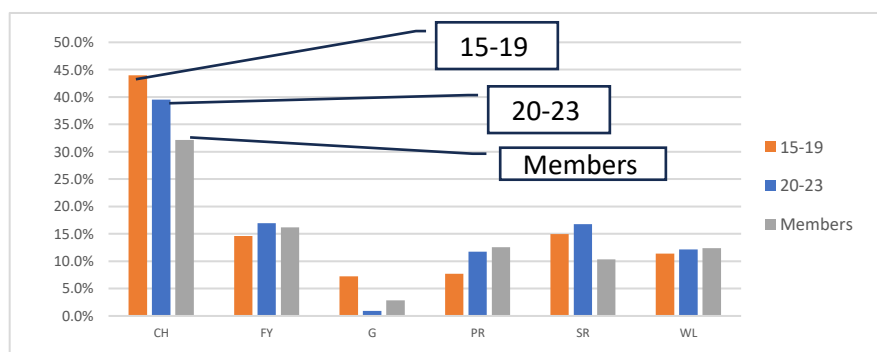
Number of Walks/Month.

The average number of walks has been:-
 -around 32 oct15-Jan17
 -then around 29 till covid
 -then 29.5 in last 18 months.



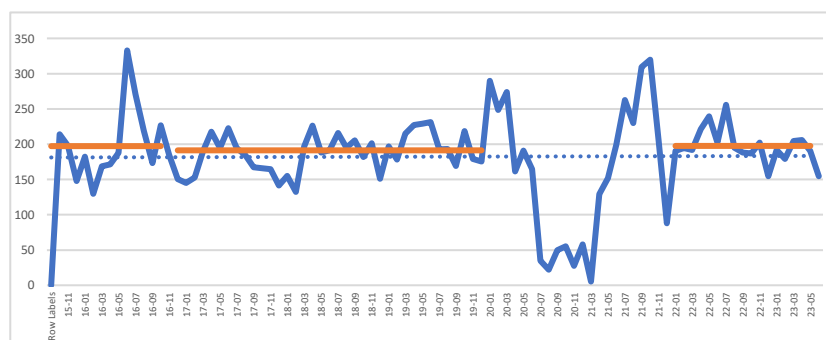
Group Activity Level

Characteristics of individual groups is discussed later, but the level of activity relates to group size.
 Very roughly, the number of walks/week is similar to the % of Mid Lancs members in that group.
 There has been some change pre and post covid, Chorley relative activity has decreased and others have slightly increased.



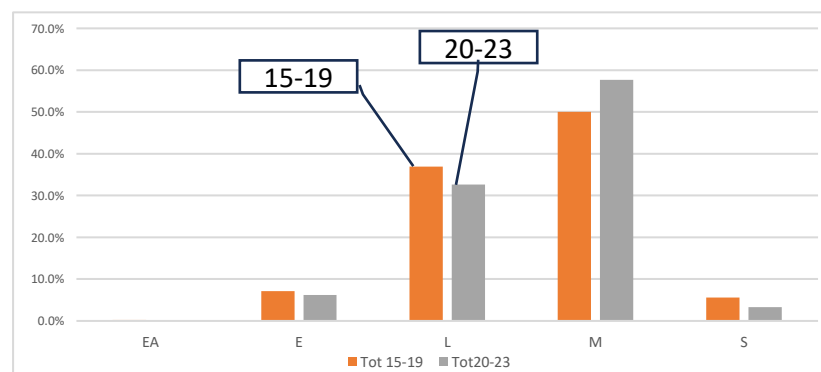
Total Miles Walked/Month

During Oct 2015 -Jan17 the average was 197miles (varying between about 130 and 230, one month of nearly 333 miles.)
 Jan17 – Jan20 the average was more consistent at 191 miles.
 Over the last 18 months the average was again 197

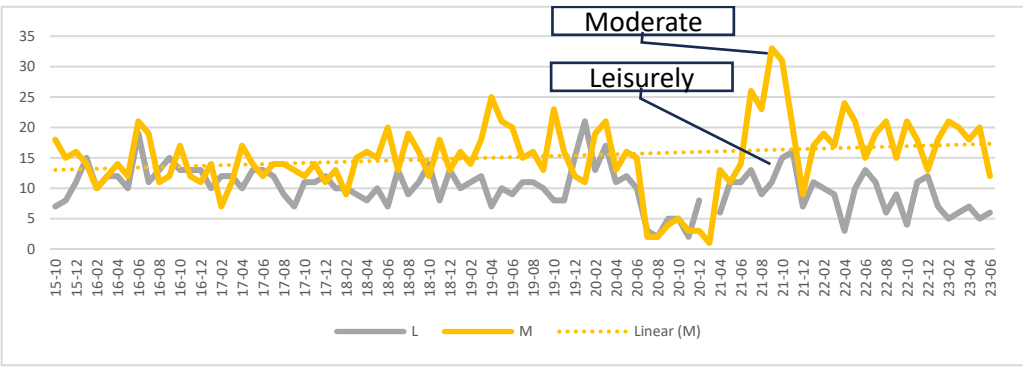


Walk Grades.

Overall, 53% of walks are rated as Moderate, 34.3% Leisurely, 7.5% Easy, 5% Strenuous and 0.2% Easy Access.
 But post covid there is a shift toward Moderate (57.7% from 50%) and less Leisurely (32.6% from 37%)



However, the switch from **Leisurely** to **Moderate** has actually been a steadily increasing trend over the whole period.
(walks getting harder or walkers finding them harder!)



B. Statistics for Groups

HOL and LWW are not included as their data was not available in the stored records.

Membership

The number of members impacts the level of activity of a group.

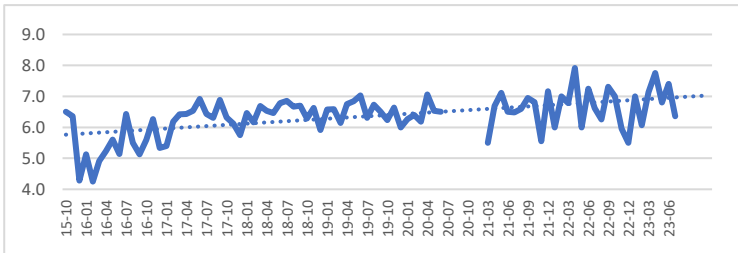
As at Jun23 the relative sizes were:- (PS ML96 are members not connected to groups)

Group	CH	FL	G	PR	SR	WL	HOL	LWW	ML96
Members	358	180	32	140	115	138	79	32	39
Percent	32.2%	16.2%	2.9%	12.6%	10.3%	12.4%	7.1%	2.9%	3.5%

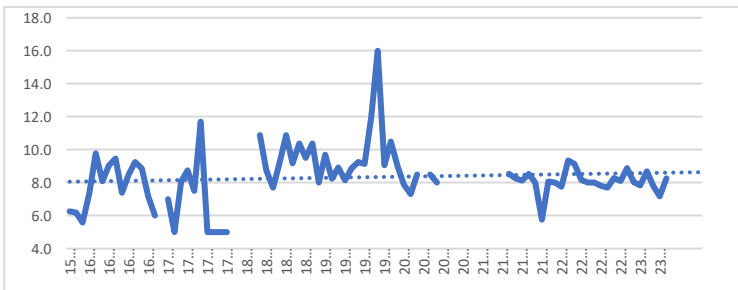
Chorley has a significant impact on the overall profile as it has the most walks and members.

Average Walk Length

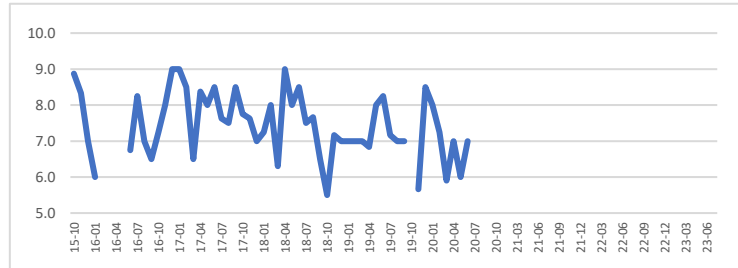
Only Chorley and Preston increased their average.



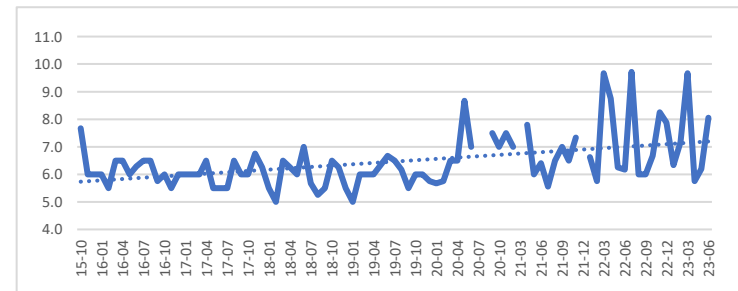
Fylde data is inconsistent but around 8.5 miles



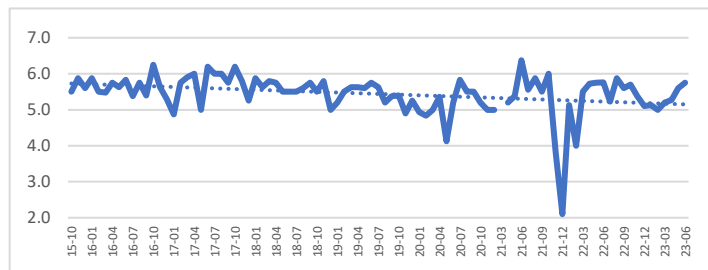
Garstang group ceased operating due to Covid but was doing about 7 mile walks.



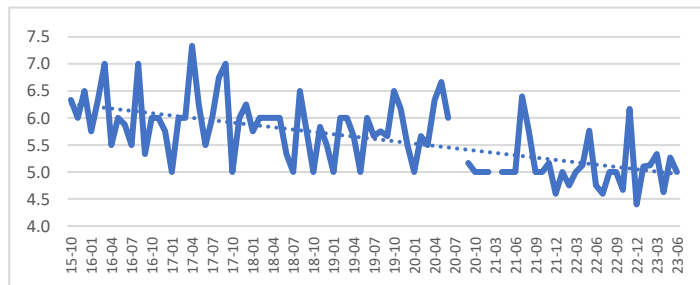
Preston was consistent around 6 miles but recently more like 7 miles.



Ribble is fairly consistent around 5.5 miles but slightly decreasing.



West Lancs has slowly reduced from about 6 to 5 miles.



Most Common Walk Length. (pre and post covid)

Chorley. Dominantly about 5 miles, good number up to 10 and a few challenges to 15 miles. Little change pre/post covid.

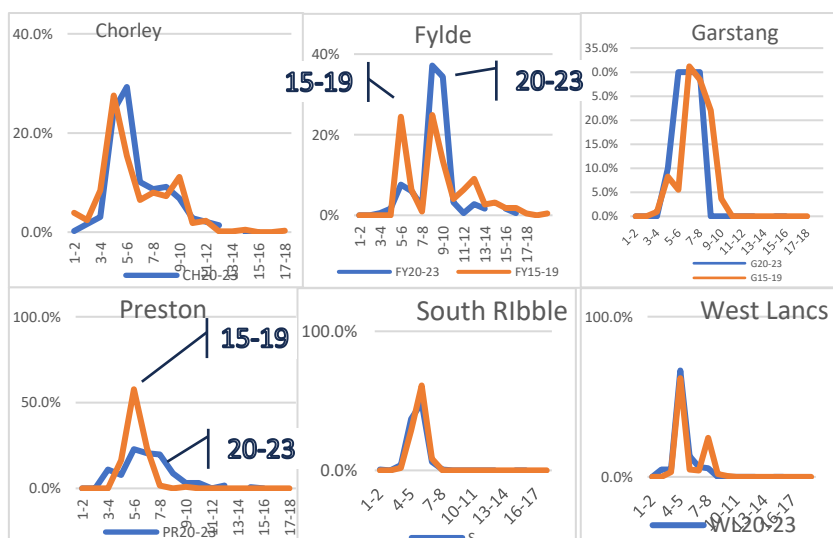
Fylde. Pre covid was equally 5 and 9 miles and some up to 20. Post covid mostly about 9 miles and a few 5 miles.

Garstang. Mostly about 7.

Preston. Predominantly about 6, but some to 10-11. Shifted up post covid.

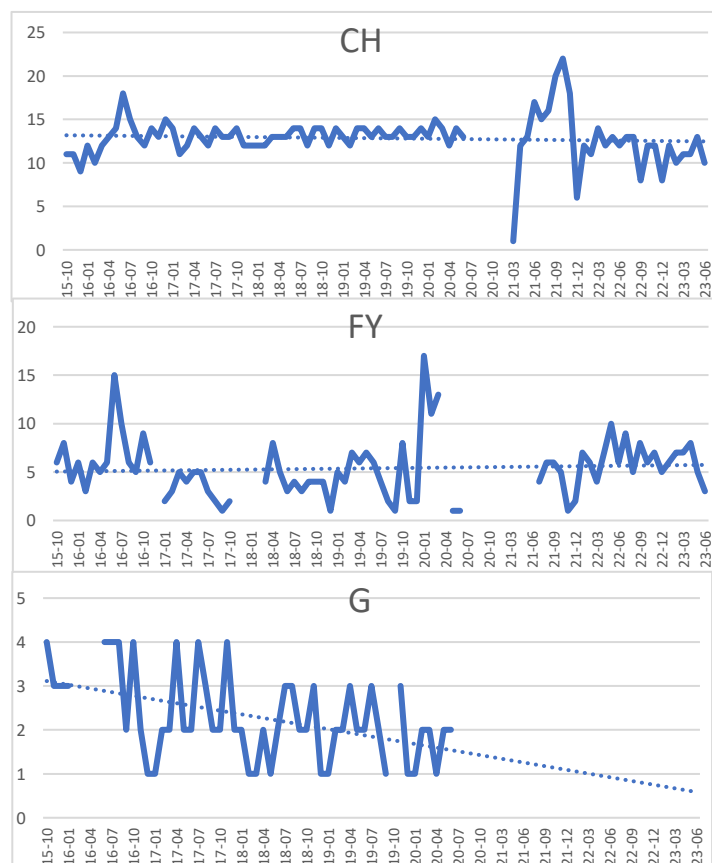
Ribble. Mostly 6 miles +/- 1 miles

West Lancs. Mostly 5 miles some 8 miles



Number of Walks/Month.

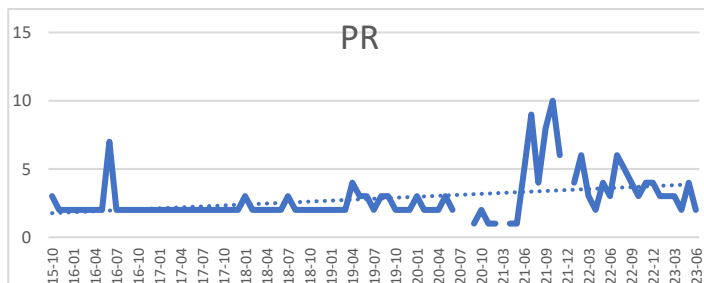
Chorley for most pre covid around 13 walks/month. Post covid similar but more erratic and dropping. Group has the most walks by far.



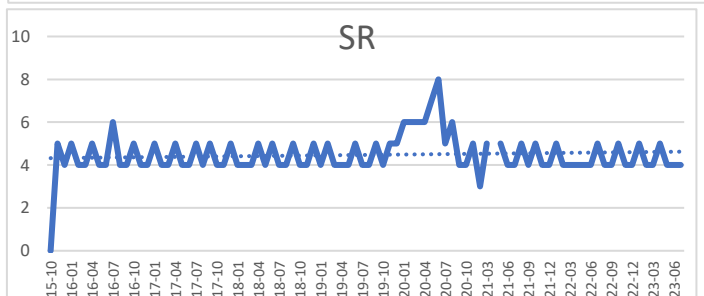
Fylde Very inconsistent, large swings around 6 /month, becoming more consistent?

Garstang. Dropped away as group faded away.

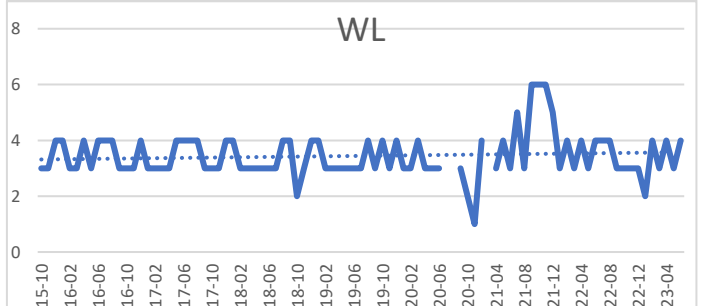
Preston. Pre covid was usually 2 /month.
Post covid lots of variance but around 4 walks.



Ribble Consistent Every Thursday so 4/5 per month.
Started extra Mon/Fri walks just before covid, but
insufficient leaders post covid

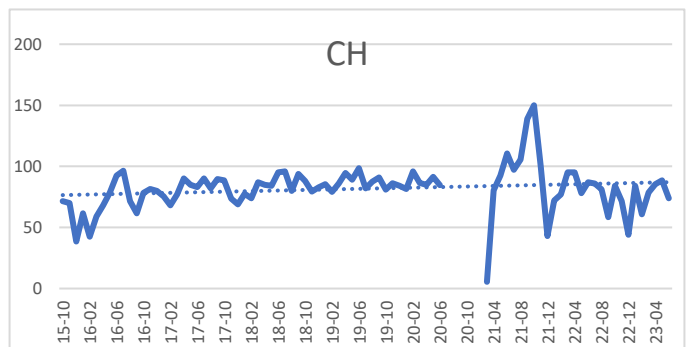


West Lancs. Consistent 3/4 walks/month.

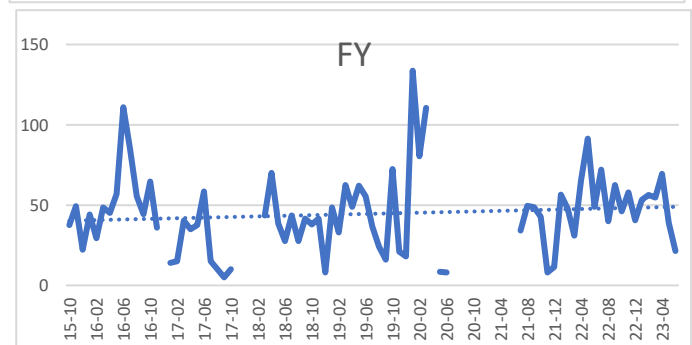


Total Miles/Month.

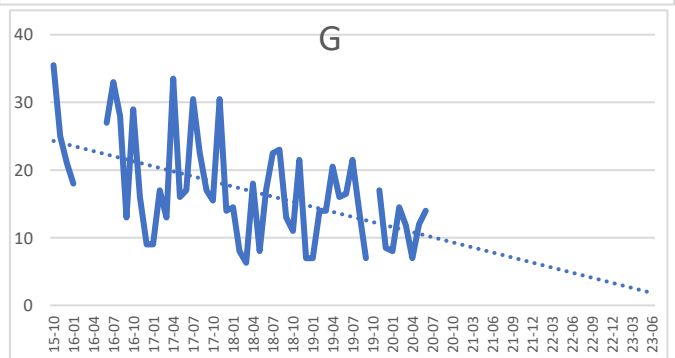
Chorley Pre covid grew to a fairly steady 85 miles/month.
More inconsistent post covid but around 70miles.



Fylde Vefy inconsistent around 50 miles/month



Garstang. Highlights the decay of the group until it ceased.



Preston. Pre covid consistently growing from 10-15 miles/month.
Post covid highly inconsistent but around 25 miles/month

Ribble Pre covid consistent around 25 miles/month.
Peak around 20-04 was planned Mon/Fri walks
Post covid shows some decrease in distances to around 23 miles.

West Lancs. Overall slowly reduced from 22 miles/month to about 18.
Post covid a bit more inconsistent but still decreasing.
However, very recently has included some 3 mile walks.

Walk Grades.

The groups, as we know, have different patterns of walks. Most have 40-50% Moderate walks but vary wildly beyond that.

Chorley Most moderate but 35% leisurely and full range of grades.

Fylde Mostly moderate but significant amounts of strenuous.

Garstang Mostly moderate. Strenuous might be a grading problem.

Preston Very similar moderate and leisurely but also 4.5% strenuous.

Ribble Similar amounts of Moderate and leisurely. A very rare strenuous and some easy.

West Lancs mainly has Leisurely walks but that relates to their area being the Lancashire plains.

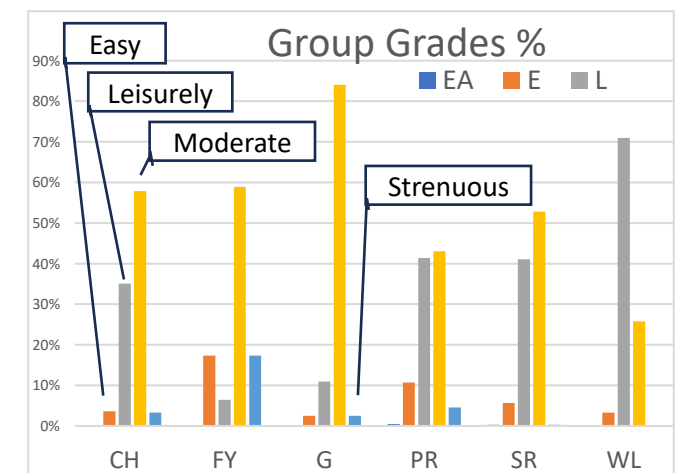
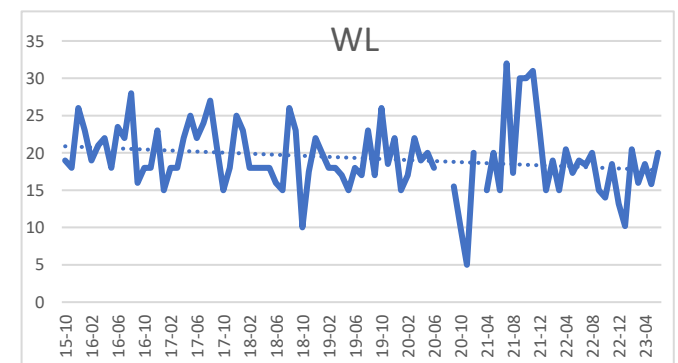
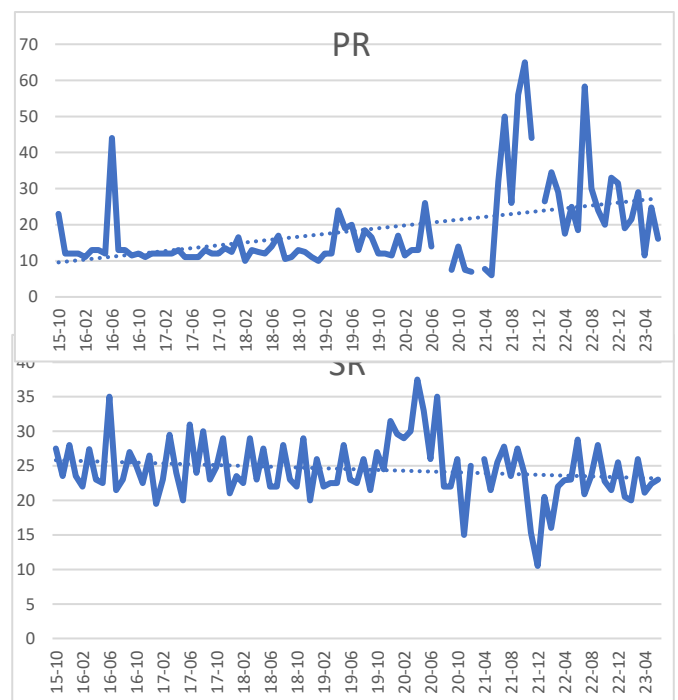
However, the interpretation of Moderate and Leisurely is highly subjective.

It seems likely that as the groups get older, what was a leisurely walk can now be labelled Moderate. Locally that is immaterial, but at national level there is a presumption of consistency of grading.

The Data behind these observations follows.

The source of the data is mainly the 4 monthly walk programmes that were generated from Oct 2015 to about 2020 which is when we stopped producing paper programmes.

Beyond that, intermittent dumps of the walks were extracted from the Rambler walk system just for the records. All of this data is on our website under Walk Leading=>Aids for Leaders=>archived Progs.



There is limited HOL data as they were not included in the 4 month programmes, and few LWW walks are included, so they have been excluded from the data. HOL do more significant walks. LWW does a wide range but often more significant.

Stick in graphs and tables when ready to finalise this.

Eric Crichton with substantial help from Joy Taylor.

1 Jul 23