



The Walk

exploring the technical
and social margins





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<http://alandix.com/alanwalkswales/>




about me
and what I do





Tiree

Tiree Tech Wave
24-28 Oct'13



University of Birmingham





Talis


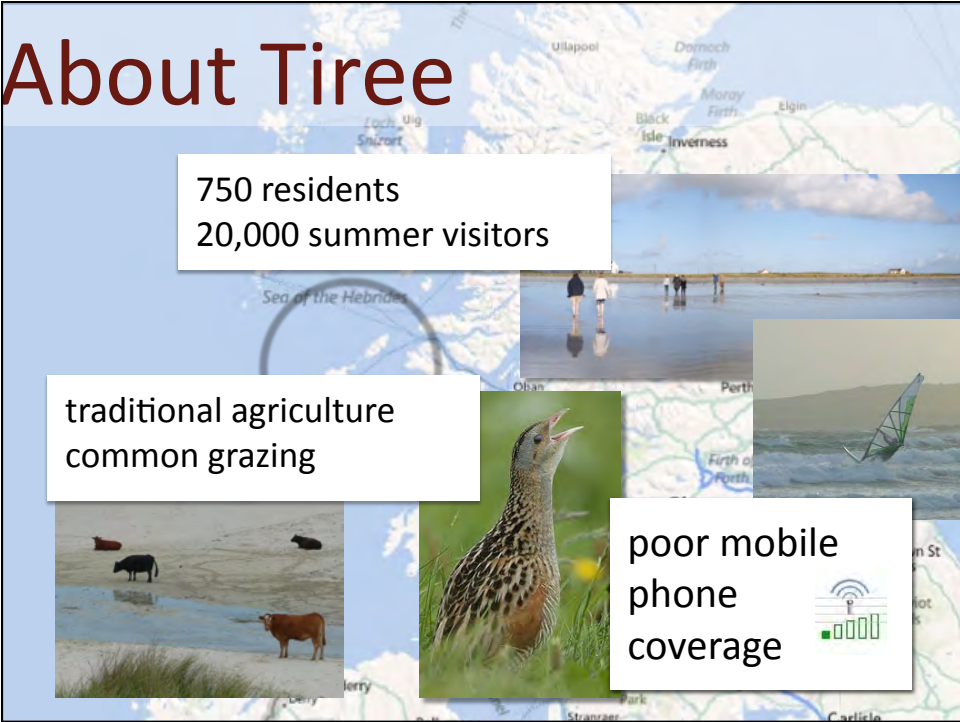
About Tiree

750 residents
20,000 summer visitors

traditional agriculture
common grazing

poor mobile
phone
coverage

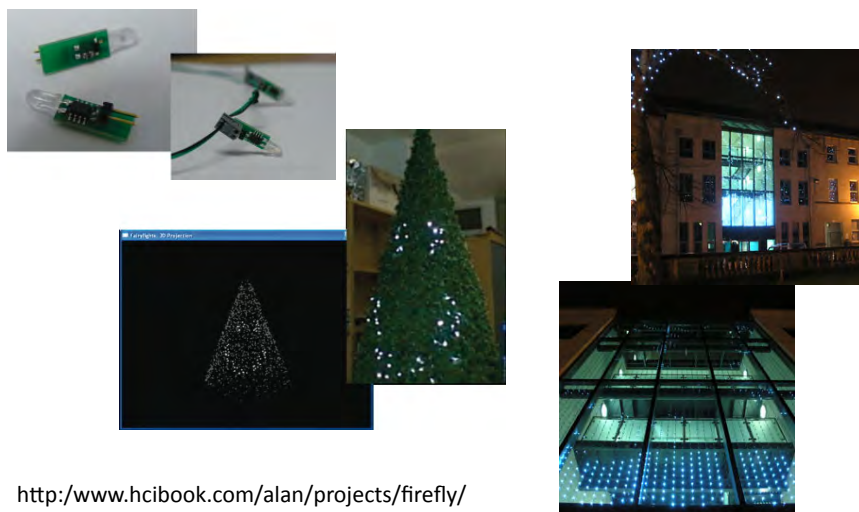
today I am not talking about ...



- intelligent internet interfaces
- visualisation and sampling
- situated displays, eCampus, small device – large display interactions
- fun and games, virtual crackers, artistic performance, slow time
- creativity and Bad Ideas
- modelling dreams and regret
- Tiree: mobile heritage & youth communication



... or even lots of lights



<http://www.hcibook.com/alan/projects/firefly/>



except ...



version soon to be launched on
interaction-design.org



use it in your own teaching

do you want to share too?





I am talking about ...



a walk

1058 miles (1700 km) around
around the margins of Wales

Welsh Coast Path



opened May 2012
linking existing paths
a single way marked route
with Offa's Dyke encircles Wales
three full traversals in 2012 (one running)



walking for war



Roman Legions



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_legion

Napoleon in Russia



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_invasion_of_Russia

The Long March



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Long_March

walking as political activism



Salt March (India)



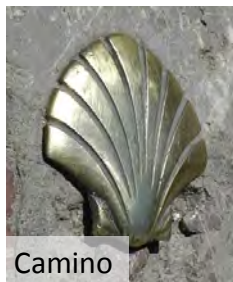
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salt_March

Jarrow March (UK)



<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2257003/Last-Jarrow-Marchers-walked-300-miles-London-poverty-protest-dies-aged-96.html>

walking as pilgrimage



Camino

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Way_of_St._James



Char Dham

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pilgrimage>

walking in the humanities



poetry & Romanticism
(19th century)



<http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/b/british-watercolours-developing-landscape-subjects/>

psychogeography
all method?



<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychogeography>





walking Wales



vision

personal

encircling, encompassing, pilgrimage, homecoming,

practical

IT for the walker & IT for local communities

philosophical

reflections on walking and space, locality and identity

research

personal agenda and living lab



no hard boundaries

research – practice
personal – philosophical

19th century science or Mediaeval?

walking as research



slow! ... and hurts :-/

imposed time frame ... for good & ill

waving banners

using technology

Q. “what technology do you use?”

A. “a map”

keeping moving, in the wet, ..



the best technology!



voice recorder

real buttons!!

use it while moving



data



location

GPX ... batteries ... sporadic signals

bio-sensing

ECG (heart), EDA (skin) and accelerometers

audio and images

in the moment

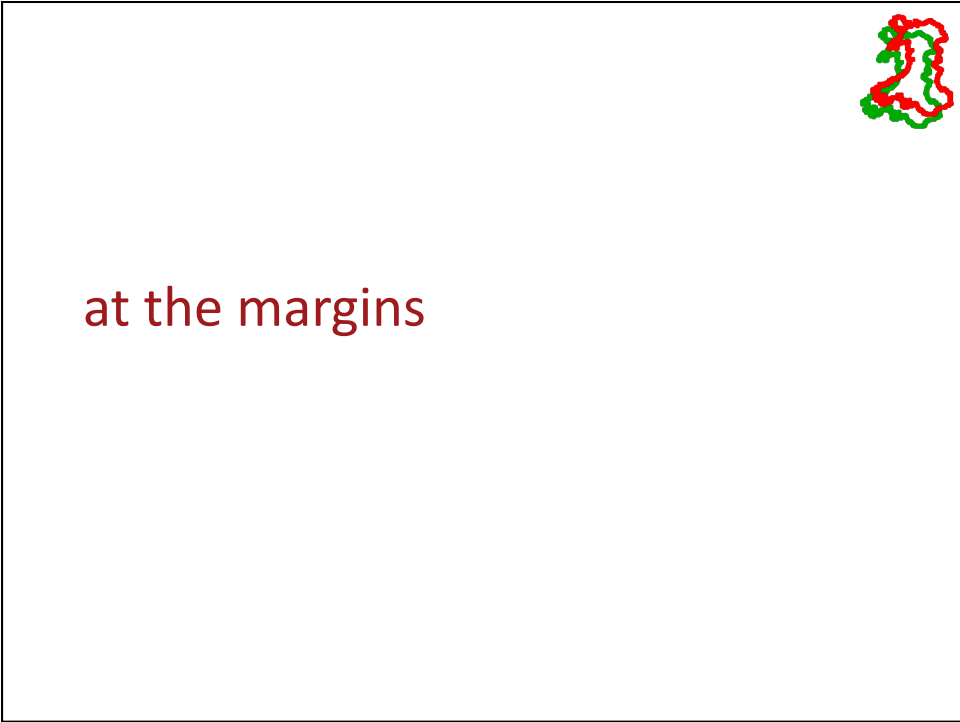
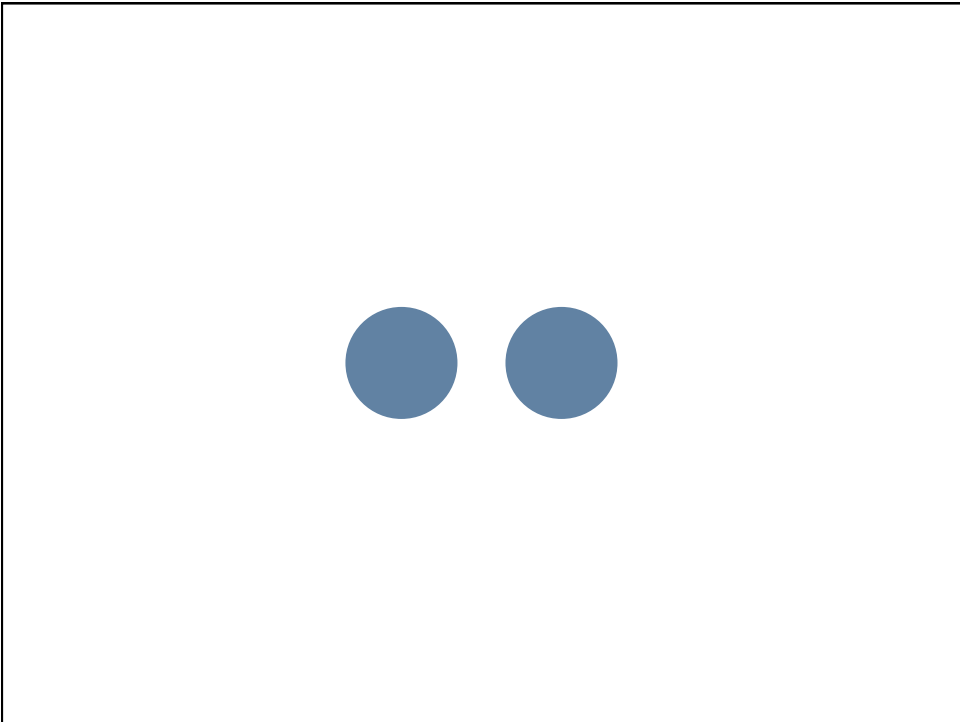
text

after the event



} implicit

} explicit



at the margins



social marginality:

poor, old, rural

information marginality:

poor connectivity, old devices

IT deepens the divide

... but can IT help in the margins?

IT in the margins



lessons from each other

Harris Tweed
hole in the wall
simple SMS

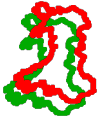
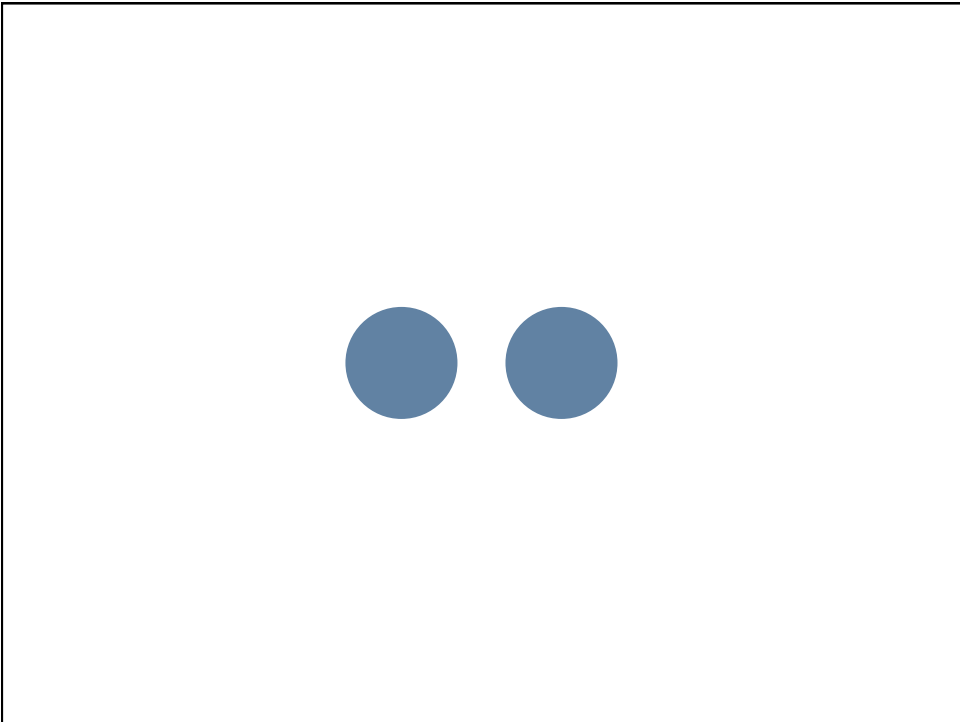


www.hole-in-the-wall.com

an old dream ...

the electronic village shop
what now?





community and identity

borderlands



conflict and boundaries:

Offa's Dyke, Norman Castles, Caerleon

contested territory

how many counties in Wales?

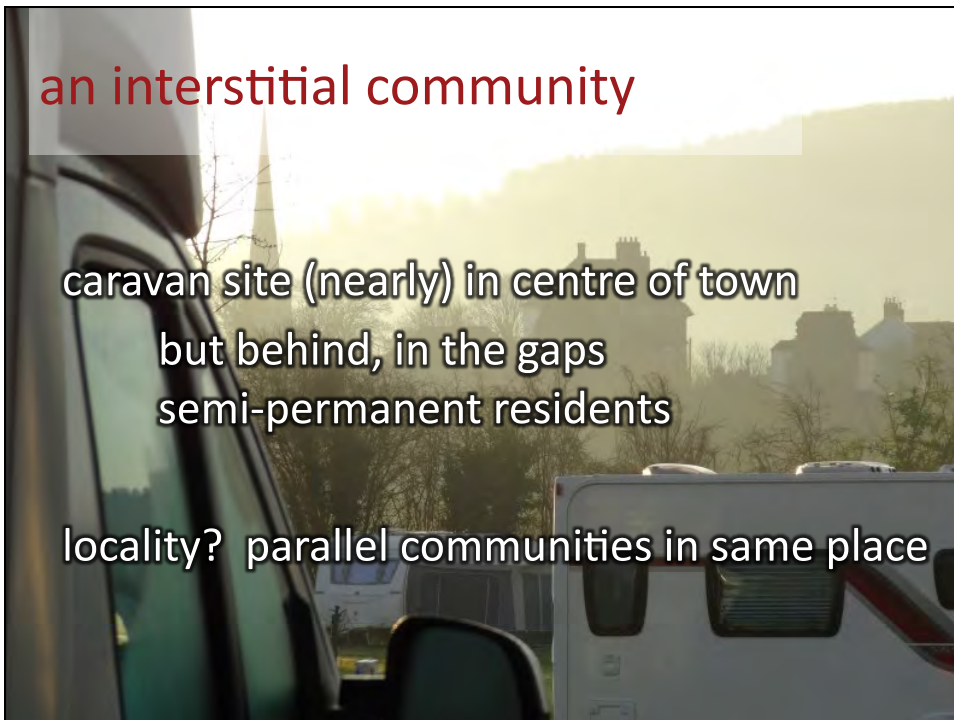
divided yet joined



an interstitial community

caravan site (nearly) in centre of town
but behind, in the gaps
semi-permanent residents

locality? parallel communities in same place



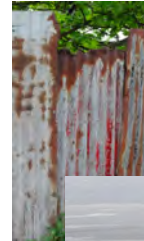
community and cohesion



abandonment and dissolution:

Rhyl – dustbin of Liverpool

Dee estuary – even the pubs closed



internal strength

Penmaenmawr – in the face of adversity

community enterprise: shops, pubs, arts



language and culture



intimately linked

even for the non-Welsh speaker!

changed in my lifetime

but under threat again

technological implications

not just translations ... media choice etc.



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capel_Celyn

maps

reclaiming the local map within technological space



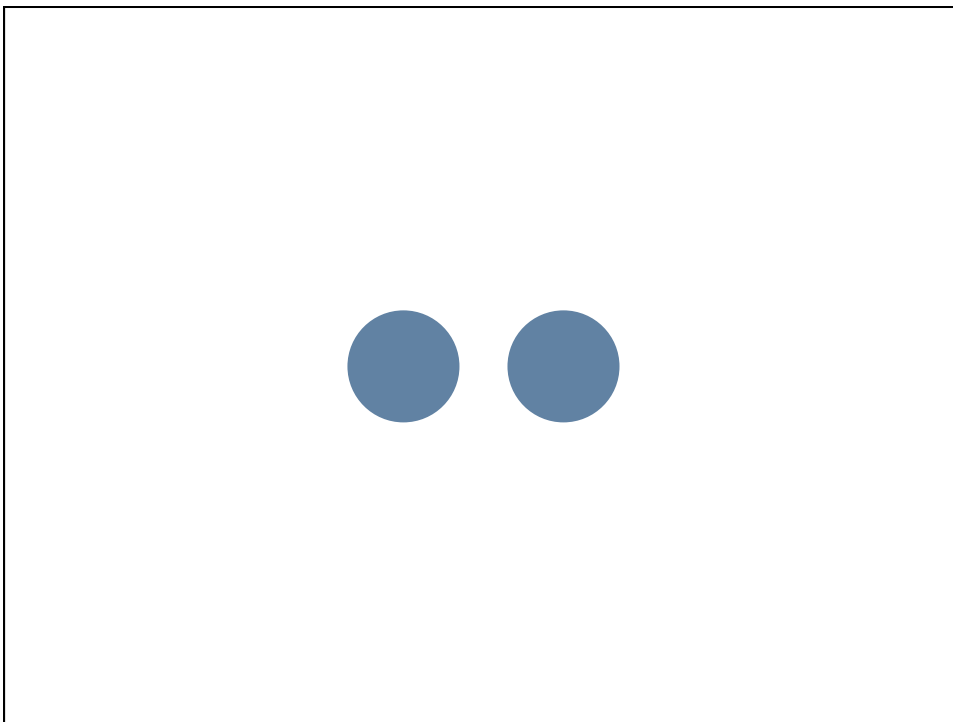
mapping never easier ... so long as it is 'standard'

"Post-Renaissance maps cover the surface of the world with an homogeneous Cartesian grip"

Barbara Bender



local maps – local concerns





health and well being

walking and health



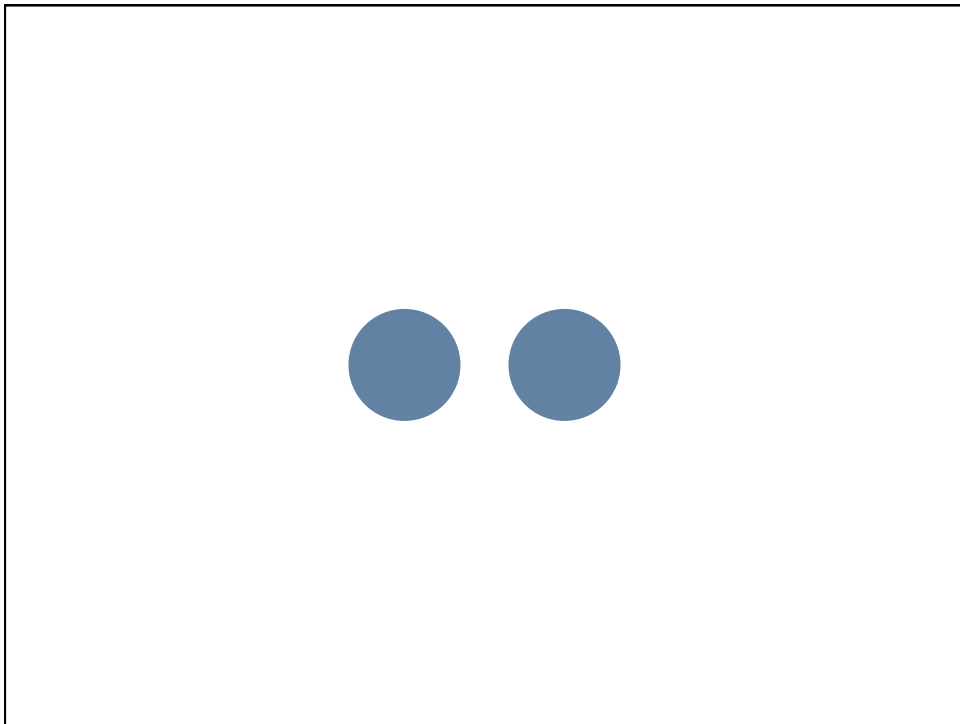
logistics and transport:

constant stress!! ... and I was just visiting

from mountain goat to geriatric and back

health and wealth





connectivity

I expected it to be bad ...

but it was worse

infrastructure or privilege?



what is the greatest
British invention?

infrastructure or privilege?



19th century – Penny Post
the amazing invention
revolutionised communication



Today – Internet
50% of Welsh schools say
poor connectivity hampers education

<http://www.victorianweb.org/history/pennypos.html>

not just jerky movies ...



Software Update 2.3Gb
security patch

software makes it worse ...



Twitter 140 chars ...

but unusable with poor signal
heavy XML API



email slow but works – 1970s technology



Flickr uploader freezes on poor connections
... even in Paris!



'localisation'



not just language and culture

software embodies context:
technological and economic assumptions

making a difference?



public policy – improving infrastructure

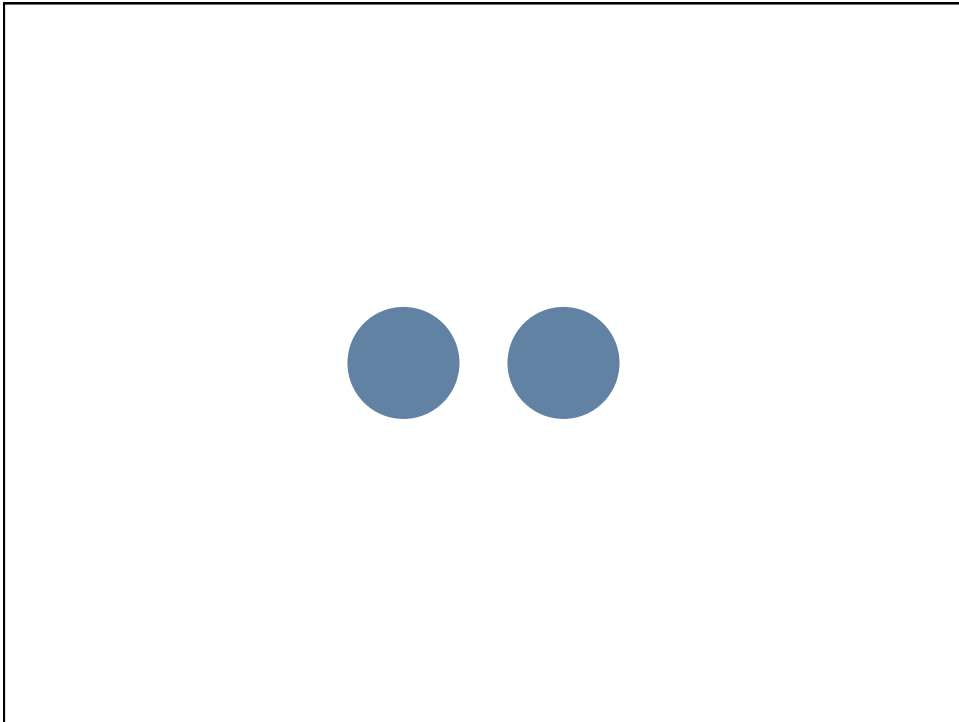
design – connectivity-aware software
e.g. mobile apps

distributed system not thin client

OS – APIs to reveal connectivity

local webs





research looking out

living lab

others outcomes

others



data curation

please use it :-)



exhibition at Lampeter



take aways and you ...



HCI course materials – talk/email me!

methodological boundaries of academia ... ?

design for low connectivity

dimensions of connectivity?

sharing research data

1058 miles done what next ...



more:

w: alandix.com/alanwalkswales

t: @alanwalkswales

f: [facebook.com/alanwalkswales](https://www.facebook.com/alanwalkswales)



