



Walk and talk: The Proper Blokes Club after one of their weekly walks in Greenwich

## A place for men to talk on the move

By John Lawrence

When Londoner Scott Johnson started sharing videos of his walks and his thoughts on coping with stress and anxiety, they led to the formation of a weekly walking group where men could meet to talk.

The Proper Blokes Club established regular walks in Greenwich, Southwark, Wapping and Woolwich and now the first group north of the river meets every Tuesday evening in Finchley Central.

The group is open to men of all ages and backgrounds. Scott hopes the walks are a chance for them to find a friendly ear, share their own experiences and spend time with people they maybe wouldn't normally meet in their daily lives.

Scott said: "People get different things out of the walks, maybe a sense of purpose, a bit of exercise, being out and about in the open, and broadening their horizons, which is always good for the mind."

### An evening stroll

The local group meets at the entrance to Finchley

Central tube station at 7pm on Tuesdays and heads off for an hour's walk around the local streets. Once the lighter evenings arrive, it will take in local green areas and parks as well. Scott added: "I think the Finchley group in particular proves that people from dif-

ferent backgrounds can all get on. It's really interesting to see people walking in their pairs or threes solidly engaged in conversation. "They would probably never have known each other before because they don't move in the same social circles so



A chance to chat: A group also meets in Finchley

this breaks down that barrier. It doesn't matter where you come from or what you do for a living, you are all just men at the end of the day." Find out more by following The Proper Blokes Club on Facebook or just turn up at 7pm on Tuesdays. There's no cost and no weekly commitment, just come along when you want.

## Mike's odyssey on two feet is still on

By Mike Coles

On 17 March 2020, a couple of days before the first lockdown, when everything was being cancelled, I thought I ought to do something to maximise my allowed exercise time—so I decided to walk to Marseilles in Southern France.

I couldn't leave London, of course, so I did the actual walking around local streets and parks and plotted my progress on Google maps, which also plotted the route. I could check local hotels and restaurants on Tripadvisor links.

After 124 consecutive days of walking at just under my target distance of 10km a day I reached Marseilles on 18 July 2020. Covid was still in full swing so I decided to continue walking south. I carried on to reach Gibraltar, and then took the ferry over to Tangier and entered Africa. I then spent every day in 2021 walking south on the west coast of Africa.

I was still averaging just under 10km per day. Crossing the Senegal River at Rosso I reached Dakar in Senegal in December; then 10 January 2022 was a significant day as I reached Banjul in The Gambia, still on the west coast, after 666 consecutive days.

It reminds me how big Africa is and how normal maps don't reflect its true size. That's why I refer to the Gall-Peters projection, a rectangular map projection which maps all areas so they have the correct sizes relative to each other and gives a better idea of relative distances. The journey continues!



Heading south: Mike's walking route from East Finchley to The Gambia

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## Indoor car boot sale

The monthly Muswell Hill Indoor Car Boot Sale will take place on Saturday 26 February from 10am to 1pm at Hornsey Parish Church Hall, on the corner of Cranley Gardens and Park Road, N10 3AH.

Admission is 50p and refreshments are available. For information, contact 020 8368 8180.

## Japanese Acupuncture Clinic Finchley

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**Holy Communion & Children's Sunday Club:** Sunday @ 10.00 am - in Church

**Morning Prayer:** Thursday @ 9.00 am - Online

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