

## National Activity Officer Report

2024-2025

This has been a relatively easy year for me as there has been some brilliant work been done the previous NAO and a team of people supporting him.

Many of the events have already been arranged already such as the upcoming AGM and 2025 Spring holiday.

There has been very little in the way of handover as of yet, and I have not been as proactive as I should have been. Regrettably I have been unable to attend any of the NEC meetings due to work commitments.

I have recently reached out to the National Chair and had no responses.

This highlights the fact that communication continues to be a large floor in our current set up. There are brilliant activities happening at group, area and National scale that are often not publicised as widely as they could.

As there was an agreement to not have a central database it is hard to have a grasp of how our membership is looking and changing. Are we recruiting more members? Are we retaining them?

The traditional Plus calendar has had a big change with the new date for Wash, which may have had an impact on numbers. This I know has caused the organising committee some challenges and frustration to overcome. I have been in regular contact with the Wash Chair to look to assist where possible.

Last year I was involved in the entertainment for the revised format for the Kings Lynn summer do and have agreed to assist for 2025 as well.

Plus is a brilliant organisation that seems to have been left in the 90's. We never embraced the new technology for social media and websites. There are so many ways people can connect and find out about groups that our old ways of newspaper press releases, posters and printed programmes are very outdated and are not as effective as possible.

There is clearly a need for a sense of belonging and people do enjoy being parts of groups. Look at how many groups are being opened on platforms such as meetup and on Facebook.

I have started to realise that our initial age ranges 18-29, then 36 are a very young, inexperienced and perhaps less worldly demographic. After this stage many would go and have families and focus on career over a social life. Combined with the rising cost

of living and the afore mentioned lack of our adoption of technology and lack of communications I can see why our numbers dwindled.

Perhaps now we need to review our offering and our marketing to offer different types of activity. Target an older demographic who now may not have the childcare issues, may now have a set of own established hobbies and interests and make sure we cater for the current needs.

It is positive to see how well some groups are adopting technology and gaining members through social media advertising. We can all share much more about what we are doing and the things we provide. The thing is not all have the skills, desire or confidence to do this. It is brilliant to see the result of what Stevenage have done with social media, and also Midland area with some attempts at Facebook advertising.

Come the AGM I think we need to have some serious discussion on our true desires and what our future may hold.

I hope WASH 2025 is a blinding success.

I hope the AGM gets the discussion its truly needs and has the buy in of members. All should be encouraged to attend, even if only on zoom. More importantly to participate and be truly honest.

I do believe with the right tweaks and proper passion Plus can find its place and purpose again.

It won't happen quickly; it won't be easy. It won't be cheap!

IT IS DO-ABLE if we all pull our socks up and all do just a little bit more. Spread the word, get new people, new ideas, new enthusiasm. New focus? Renewed commitment and reignite the passion.

You can't make an omelette without breaking some eggs! Let's go break some eggs!

Adam Redshaw