



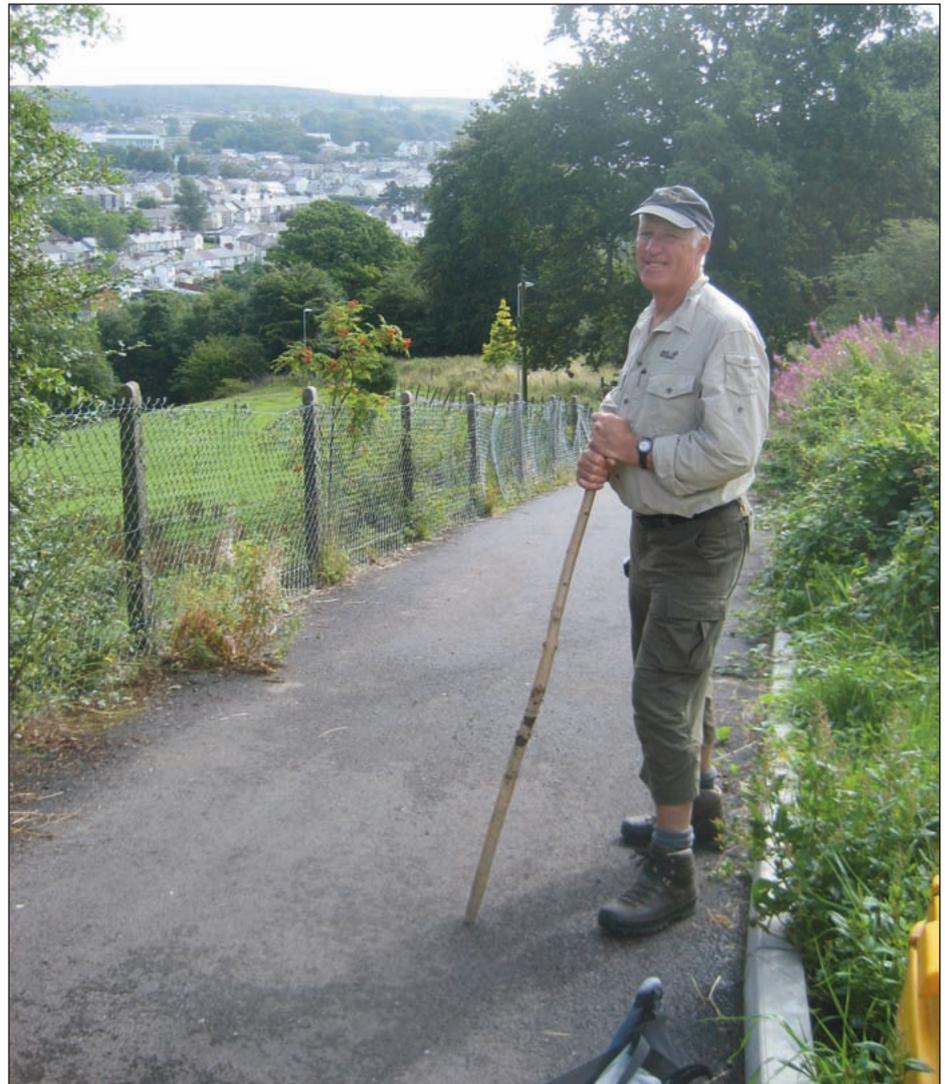
## Gwent 2013-14

In Gwent on the Welsh/English border, we support a fund (the Gwent High Sheriff's Fund) that raises money to support many of the small, local charities that help disadvantaged young people. Gwent has several patches of severe deprivation where low self-esteem and high drug use go hand in hand, often leading to high levels of vandalism and other community problems. The social and monetary costs of this are high. Last year, with contributions from the local police, our High Sheriff's fund distributed over £35,000 to around 20 charities. Since its inception, over £100,000 has been raised for some 39 local charities. I am a keen supporter of such initiatives for young people.

As a new High Sheriff in April 2013, my challenge was to continue such fundraising in addition to the normal tasks of attending judicial, civic and military events and to organise receptions and parties at which local leaders could network. I was also keen to publicise the role of High Sheriff across the county.

Pushed by my wife (as always) we considered a sponsored walk around the boundary of the county, getting sponsorship and local support as the walk moved through different areas. However detailed examination of the boundary, following every twist and turn, would mean a walk of over 200 miles – a frightening thought and beyond my energy levels over a short timescale.

But then, a thought, what about 10 walks in 10 different parts of the county highlighting the beauty of the different parts: flat lowlands, industrial heritage, black mountains, historic mining valleys, farming lowlands, river banks etc? And so the '10x10x10 Walks' were born – 10 walks of over 10 miles over 10 weeks across the summer/autumn of 2013.



The 10x10x10 Walks in Gwent by the Gwent High Sheriff – a multi-tasking challenge.

Walks were planned (round walks of close to 10 miles with not too many hills were not easy to identify in Wales) and tested for viability (a missing bridge and a resulting three-mile extra walk almost caused divorce). Brochures were produced (after many, many redrafts), publicity was sought with articles in all local press and my (and my wife's) address book was emailed for sponsorship. I opened an account with Just-Giving ([www.justgiving.com/murraymacfarlane](http://www.justgiving.com/murraymacfarlane)) to allow the funds that we hoped would flood in to be easily passed to our charity, the Community Foundation of Wales. This charity does a super job for

us managing money, vetting charities, and organising the grant-giving event where recipients are chosen by election of their peers.

And the result? At the time of writing we are over halfway through. Seven walks have been completed (successfully), and, as I write, three walks and two weeks to go. The response so far has been excellent, some 70 per cent of our fundraising target reached and a new prompt just going out. □

**Murray MacFarlane**  
High Sheriff of Gwent 2013-14