

Of bucket lists and other things

Published: January 13, 2026, 5:47 am

This morning is the first at home for just over a week. That's because we were in Pembrokeshire last week. That means that the 42 posts that came out over eight were all published when I was on holiday. And it was a very good holiday too.

Most days involved a couple of good walks - although rain stopped play once or twice.

The sea was relatively warm, as was the world around us, although fully zipped up anoraks and even scarves seemed the order of the day for most people, when we rarely needed more than a T-shirt.

The birding was good. Waders always appeal to us, and the River Nevern's estuary was full of them.

On Friday afternoon, my slight panic at seeing what I thought was a body floating in the sea turned into delight when the two curious seals seemed to want to come as close as they could to get as good a look at us as we wanted of them.

I feel rested and recovered.

And a lot of writing was done. I have come back with more potential video scripts than I had. The quantum essays were thought up.

We talked a lot, read a lot, and observed the world. A fair amount of coffee was drunk. And whilst away we travelled a massive 7km by car: the rest was on foot. The destination in question was visited by car only because the Pembrokeshire coast path looked like a poor idea when there was a severe wind warning out.

That is our type of holiday. In this context, I was then intrigued, amused, and to some degree even baffled by [this comment](#) offered in good faith after suggestions about future content on this blog:

On a separate note, I would love to know that you're checking things off your bucket list, visiting countries you didn't have the time for while working etc. The world is

getting more unstable, less tolerant and we never know when our ability to travel or see people goes away. I myself am doing this just in case I don't have as much time left as I want.

This provided us with much to discuss on the way home (a six-hour drive, and more with breaks). There are for two reasons.

First, long ago, we both agreed we had no 'bucket list,' but did have what the late Sean Lock called a 'fuckit list.' If a bucket list supposedly details those things you still want to do, then a fuckit list details those things you either do not want to do again, or never wish to do.

Regarding the bucket list, there are no countries outside the British Isles and Ireland that we now want to visit.

We have both travelled, both before and after we met. In my case, I have visited more than 25 countries, plus every county in the UK and Ireland. And frankly, if I never see an airport ever again, I will be delighted.

We agree that it is not travel that broadens our horizons, but that it is instead observing those places we go to in more detail and over the seasons that does that.

More than that, though, just as we love watching wildlife in detail and in repeated locations around where we live, knowing some other parts of the UK quite well lets us do the same there, and if you actually do this, you will know that no day is ever the same, and that is the pleasure in doing this.

So, our plan is, at most, to revisit places we already know in East Anglia, northern England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. It's not a lack of ambition that drives this. It's the liberation in knowing this that is actually what makes it exciting: observing the changes we see is truly rewarding. And what we know is that if we never go anywhere new, those places will provide more than enough to entertain us, however long we live now.

As for new experiences, neither of us believes in the ghastly neoliberal marketing concept of 'making memories'. Nor have we ever needed more than a book, a backpack, an iPad, a coffee shop, a pair of binoculars, maybe a camera, walking shoes and a cagoule (just in case) to have a good day out. We have no plan to change any of that. There is no experience that does not involve those things that we are very interested in. We are most definitely not driven by FOMO (the 'fear of missing out'). Instead, we often talk about JOMO ('the joy of missing out' on things we'd really rather not do). The list of things we have JOMO about is long.

And then there are material possessions. Many recently retired people seem to 'splash the cash' in a quite extraordinary fashion. New cars, retirement homes, second homes, and extravagant consumption seem to be the order of the day. We discussed this at

length on the way home and essentially failed to come up with anything we really needed, and that is not because we live to excess. We don't. It's just that material items aren't that important to us. The car has 122,000 miles on the clock, but it will be kept for as long as possible. And apart from some new frying pans, we struggled with finding much else to think of buying, except perhaps my desire to fill some gaps in my railway history library, which has been built up over more than 50 years, and my desire to finish a model railway, already overlong in the making. But it's not affectation to say we could think of nothing more. We take living fairly simply seriously. Again, for us, that is liberating, and maybe reflects the Quaker thinking we both share on this issue, where simplicity is a path willingly chosen.

Nor, when we moved on from those issues, is there much in the way of entertainment we are looking for. We were never big concert goers. I admit we used to eat out quite a lot. Now we enjoy cooking more, and we like knowing what we are eating, as well as knowing that the food on offer has not just been reheated in a microwave, which seems to happen far too often in many places these days. The cinema is an occasional visit. We watch National Theatre Live more often than we will ever go to the actual theatre, but I do admit that the odd steam railway is visited along the way. That said, the reality is, this is all fairly everyday stuff, although we appreciate being able to enjoy them all.

In other words, there is no bucket list. We can't find one, and we aren't worrying about it. We're fortunate enough to want what we have and can afford.

So what is on the fuckit list? Try these, as examples (there are many more):

- * Cruises
- * Golf
- * International travel
- * Fashion
- * Tech for the sake of it
- * Excess

So what do we do?

- * We think.
- * We read
- * We (well, I) write.
- * We talk, debate, observe, and then start all over again.
- * And we walk, watch birds, have coffee, and do all the above whilst doing those things too.

You might call that mundane. Or repetitious. And even odd. And who knows, maybe it is. But we don't really care. That is what we do. And that's why Jacqueline really does not mind that, whilst we were on holiday last week, I also published 42 blogs, only a few of them written before we went.

So, do I need a bucket list? In short, no. But I did decide there were some things to add to my fuckit list. These include:

- * Neoliberalism
- * Fascism
- * Corruption
- * Injustice
- * Inequality
- * Faux democracy

I would like to be rid of them. Achieving that does then, in a truly (quantum) entangled way, become my bucket list. And I am happy with that. And that's why I write, even when on holiday. It's just what I do. I can't imagine doing anything else, so long as I am able.