

Longer Walks (October 2015 to September 2016)

Here is a record of our longer walks in iU3A's third year. 45 walks in all and if you'd walked all of them you'd have covered about 450 miles. There's a link to the detail of each walk at the end of each section. For more recent walks, go to our web page [here](#)

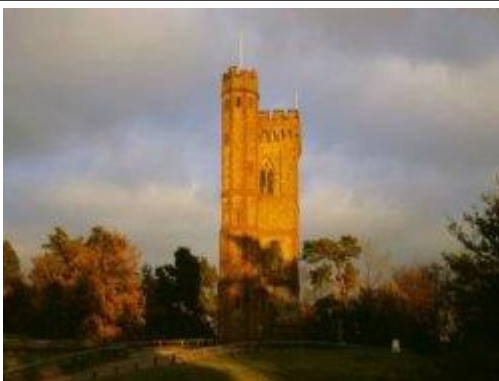
October



Princes Risborough to Great Missenden The colours just starting to creep into the leaves, saw 14 of us on this 10 mile stroll in rolling Chilterns countryside. We may have set a record for the number of named walks we touched - Ridgeway, Icknield Way, Chilterns Way and South Bucks Way. We bumped into another U3A group just before lunch and chatted fraternally until we realized we were in competition for what therefore proved a rather slow (though good when it arrived) lunch at the Hampden Arms. Then on to to Great Missenden via the South Bucks Way. [Details](#)



Stort Valley Way Another 12 miles of the 28 miles of the 'Way'. Previously we'd walked the valley, this time it was the surrounding hills. We started on the river at Sawbridgeworth, followed the canal until the first lock then climbing to the villages of Sheering and Matching, across some heavy muddy fields. After lunch we left the Stort Valley Way and headed back through Churchgate Street to finish at Harlow Mill Station. The group was all male - a first. We got soaked in the morning but had a chance to dry out over lunch (and Stuart's birthday drink) and the sun shone for us all afternoon. [Details](#)



Leith Hill Nine of us enjoyed pleasant autumn weather for this mildly demanding ramble through the Surrey Hills. Between two little known rural train stations it included Leith Hill, at around 1,000 ft one of the highest points in the South East. Mostly we were walking in National Trust woodland, with trees turning colour and pheasants everywhere. We lunched at the 'most secluded pub in Surrey' in the tiny hamlet of Friday Street. Later, one of us relieved an antique shop in Abinger Hammer of one of its least accessible plates. [Details](#)



Hayes to Knockholt If you ever thought of Bromley as a boring London Borough, this walk would change your mind. With acres of beautiful mature deciduous woodland, ablaze with autumn colour even on a very rainy day, it seemed a world away from the city. Passing by the famous Wilberforce Oak and Down House, home of Charles Darwin, we reached Cudham for a very welcome pub stop and a chance to refuel and dry out ready for the afternoon leg to Knockholt. In spite of the conditions, 11 hardy walkers turned out and must hold the record now for most stiles - around 19 - crossed on one outing. [Details](#)



Henley-on-Thames This autumnal outing prompted a decent turnout (14, including 2 new members.) A walk of two halves, much of it in light drizzle, saw us in the morning walking along the 'rowing' section of the Thames past Temple Island and then through fields to the village of Hambleden. Lunch at the aptly named Stag and Huntsman was neither quick to arrive (a rival group arrived just before us) nor cheap, but no-one who ate left hungry. During a rather more strenuous afternoon we enjoyed vivid and varied autumn colours in rolling woodland. The infrequent train service back from Henley allowed time for tea (or chocolate.) [Details](#)

November



Uxbridge to Moor Park Our first November walk entailed a morning stroll along the Grand Union canal and an unexpectedly sunny afternoon across Batchworth Heath. A quintessential autumn day, misty and strange along the canal, then fields, followed by fine late autumn beech and oak colours as the sun briefly emerged. Lunch at the Coy Carp was OK when it arrived but service was so slow we decided never again. Navigating the heath proved a challenge to the leader but those who'd stayed the course were tolerant of a slightly longer road section on our way to the welcoming lights of Moor Park station. [Details](#)



Welwyn The forecast of a dry November day turned into most of the day being in drizzly rain. A long morning walk led through woodland, the Brocket Estate and along the River Lea Way. Towards Ayot St Lawrence the night's gales meant we had to negotiate a fallen tree blocking the path. The Brocket Arms welcomed us warmly for lunch despite our bedraggled appearance. Tempting as it was to linger by the log fire, we wanted to get back before dark. A shorter afternoon saw us in a mix of open countryside, field paths and bridle ways and finally through the woods of Sherrards park and back to the station. [Details](#)



Epping Forest A repeat of this popular walk through the length of the forest. The weather was kind to us with skies clearing allowing sun to filter through the trees. Of course, with this time of year, comes mud. But only a couple of stretches had us slip-sliding about the place. A pleasant lunch at the King's Oak at the centre of the forest with the admirably quick service. In the afternoon our route took us past the site of Ambresbury Banks, an old Iron Age fort site. Legend has it that Boudica made a last stand here against the Romans in the year 61. [Details](#)



Erith to Bexley Having completed the clockwise rotation to Purfleet on the North side of the Thames of the London LOOP, this walk saw us starting on the South side at Erith. A very blustery day opened with wide estuary scenes - and bits of industrial backyard. Some thought it bleak, others saw beauty in the big skies. Leaving the Thames, we turning inland, first up the Dartford Creek, then along the River Cray, looking tired in places, for the rest of the day. After a pub lunch in Crayford with a good-value Senior Citizen menu, we walked through parkland, passed Hall Place, and ambled through forest to Bexley. [Details](#)

December



The Christmas Social This year 30 members joined this pleasant stroll, picking up from last year's route which ended in Greenwich. This year we continued along the Thames Path on the North side from Island Gardens to Tower Bridge. The rain stayed away and we had bright blue skies for the later part. We ended in The Dickens Inn at St Katherine Dock. Apart from generally celebrating, we had two awards to present. The prestigious Yellow Jersey for the most walks attended in the year (with 35 walks completed) went to Chris Bulford, then the best Christmas outfit on the day, went (easily) to Sarah Roth. Well done both. [Details](#)

January



Pymmes Brook Trail Our first walk of the new year attracted a record turnout of 20 - some perhaps wishing to clear away Christmas cobwebs. It followed this less well-known trail through North London, from Monken Hadley Common in Barnet to Picket's Lock in Enfield. 12 miles, always keeping the Pymmes Brook (a tributary of the River Lea) at close hand, with some stretches along suburban pavements but others through parkland. With such a big group we split between various lunch places in Palmers Green. Some (possibly due to the hearty Turkish lunch) then pulled out, others continuing to Picket's Lock. [Details](#)



Hampton Court Circular A lovely 9 mile walk through the Royal Parks of Hampton Court and Bushey, under sunny but cold bright-blue January skies. The morning, mostly in Bushey Park, took in its many water features (frozen ponds with 'skating' bird life), the deer park, attractive plantations, woodland, riverside paths and formal water gardens. After a welcome lunch at the Pheasantry cafe, we headed past the imposing Diana fountain back into the grounds of Hampton Court Palace. We were able to fully explore its formal gardens (free to visit in winter) and have a great close-up view of the magnificent Palace. [Details](#)



Moor Park to Stanmore Walkers were warned that much of this 10 mile section of the London Loop would be muddy - and it was. But we weren't put off and on a lovely clear day we squelched our way around. A challenge, which some locals helped us to meet, was lack of signage on this national trail. Another was finding the kitchen shut at our intended lunch pub, 'The Case Has Altered'. Indeed it had, since a check 24 hours before. A close-by and probably better pub saved the day. The afternoon was easier going with more solid paths, some lovely forest trails and great views down to distant London. [Details](#)

February



Mortimer to Aldershot Our first Feb. walk saw us cover the 9.5 mls between two rural stations west of Reading with rolling countryside and big skies. In the morning we crossed and re-crossed an attractive little stream, the Foundry Brook, to reach the Roman town of Cavella Atrebatum and the church of St Mary the Virgin, built above Roman temples and partly with bricks from the town. After enjoying a good lunch at the busy but efficient Cavella Arms, we headed north through woodland and the rather damp Padworth Common nature reserve to reach the River Kennet, the Kennet and Avon Canal and the station for home. [Details](#)



Lewisham to Stratford A short uphill walk from Lewisham took us to the open space of Blackheath and then Greenwich Park, where we paused by the Observatory to admire the views. Then descending past the Royal Naval College and Cutty Sark to the riverside and the foot tunnel to the Isle of Dogs. Mudchute Farm Park surprises, with its grazing sheep set against the skyscrapers of Canary Wharf. Then into Millwall Docks and the docklands waterways to an early lunch at the Grapes, Sir Ian McKellen's cosy pub at Limehouse. Then a brisk walk along the Limehouse Cut to finish by London's newest open space, the Olympic Park. [Details](#)



Woolwich Arsenal to Slade Green A fine, crisp day for this 10 mile walk. From Woolwich Arsenal to Erith along the south side of the Thames, we enjoyed open views across the river, a working waterway with much industrial history and natural interest. This includes the Crossness pumping station designed by Bazalgette, piers and jetties, and mudflats important for birds. After lunch we walked by the ecologically important salt marshes of Crayford Ness, the remains of a submerged Neolithic forest and, a final surprise, the moated manor house originally built by a half-brother of William the Conqueror, finishing at Slade Green station. [Details](#)



Chipstead to Kingswood The forecast rain which in the event cleared up before lunch didn't deter many. So a group of 10 walked just under 10 miles criss-crossing the Chipstead valley through Green Belt territory in North Surrey. Although never far from habitation, this was a mainly quiet ramble through a varied landscape of ancient woodland, open downs and farmland. The muddy conditions made it a bit more arduous than normal. At the Well House Inn, the barmaid served up a variety of hearty fare - as we say in this kind of review - though less confidently a good pint of shandy. [Details](#)

March



Stort Valley Way On a glorious March spring-like day 13 of us set off from Roydon along the Stort River and Canal. The morning was an easy walk along good flat dry paths to an early lunch stop at Harlow Mill, the sun warm enough for us to enjoy lunch outside by the river. The afternoon continued along the canalside but with some stretches of not so good paths with even the odd slightly muddy section. But with sculptures and artists centres along the way the 12 miles passed quickly and we reached Bishops Stortford early. Our luck held with a train arriving as we reached the platform - giving a speedy return through Tottenham Hale. [Details](#)



Lee Valley 12 walkers for this early March walk, with a prospect of seeing and hearing some interesting birds. Mostly cloudy and so not great light but we refreshed our memory of common bird song - wren, great tit, blue tit, chaffinch and robin. We also saw some larger birds - cormorant, heron, little egret, great crested grebes and greylag geese in a variety of settings. There were lapwing, tufted duck and shoveller around too and one of us was lucky enough to glimpse a kingfisher flashing over the water. We covered a mostly level 8 miles through woodland and alongside some spectacular lakes with some detours to avoid mud. [Details](#)



Totteridge A cold dry day, with welcome warm afternoon sunshine for this wonderfully rural walk. The morning was spent south of the ridge that is Totteridge, initially following Dollis Brook. Then heading west along Folly Brook through the woodland and meadows around Darlands Lake. This area, once formal parkland, is now a haven for wildlife and flora including the rare snakeshead fritillary. After lunch, to follow the Dollis Valley Greenway path through many fields and water meadows to complete the circle. The leader's concerns about the continuing wet and muddy conditions underfoot were well founded! [Details](#)



Ashridge & Ivinghoe Beacon This was a fairly easy 9 mile walk on good paths. We started from Tring then we climbed out of the valley through part of Ashridge Forest to the Bridgewater Monument (which commemorates the "father" of Britain's canals). We continued through Ashridge Forest and then on along the ridge to Ivinghoe Beacon. There were stunning views over the Chilterns, including of the partly Norman church at Pitstone and the 17th century Pitstone windmill. From there we turned back following the Ridgeway and made our way back down to Tring. Red kites wheeled below us around Ivinghoe Beacon, we heard at least one woodpecker in the woods,

and saw a nuthatch among other birds at the Brownlow cafe. Again we were lucky with the weather with a spring sun starting to bring some warmth. [Details](#)



Stanmore to High Barnet This 11 miles completed the last northern section of the London Loop that we'd not undertaken before. We started at the end of the Jubilee line and finished at the end of the Northern line. Some lovely parts of countryside but some road sections as well. We also had some hills to climb making it quite a varied walk. The weather forecast wasn't correct meaning we had to shelter from a couple of heavy showers - adding to the mud of course! But our merry band wasn't put off and we were rewarded with some Interesting Facts along the way. Then at the end, still looking for more exercise, took to the local outdoor gym. [Details](#)

April



Kingston upon Thames to Wimbledon Should have been so simple - if only the leader hadn't led half the group to start the walk from Hampton Court! Thanks to smart phone technology and a good bus service we managed to link up with the others quite quickly, and set off at a brisk pace, enjoying fine weather and a very attractive stretch of the river up to Richmond. After lunch we crossed Richmond Park and Wimbledon Common taking in the lovely gardens at Isabella Plantation & Cannizaro Park to end at Wimbledon station. Recheck of the OS map says this walk was actually nearer 11 miles. [Details](#)



Laindon to Tilbury We started in the rolling Essex hills with great views down to the distant Thames estuary. The route led us to the old village of Horndon-on-the-Hill with its 15th century coaching house and Grade 1 listed church. We then descended to Stanford-le-Hope. After lunch the terrain changed as we weaved through old gravel pits down to the estuary with wide open vistas. Following the flood wall, through an SSI, we reached historic Coldhouse Fort. This has been a defensive position through many eras with much of the old fort topped with more recent WW2 fortifications. Further upstream we come to the Henry VIII star shaped Tilbury Fort. A long but rewarding walk. [Details](#)



Sunningdale to Windsor There was a small and select group for this very pleasant 10 mile stroll in lovely spring walking weather. It featured lots of colourful flowers - indeed one member decided to curtail the walk at lunchtime in order to spend time at The Savill Garden (but she is the Shorter Walks coordinator, so that's all right). We witnessed the many different aspects of Windsor Great Park, including lakes, gardens, deer, monuments and the aptly named Long Walk up to Windsor Castle at the end. Windsor itself was alive with preparations for Her Majesty's 90th. Unfortunately this was only iU3A's 89th longer walk. [Details](#)



Harlow Town After the initial hazards of mud, stiles, a ford and an extremely busy road.... it settled into a gentle 8.6 mile walk starting and ending at Harlow Town Station. The walk crossed fields, small woodlands and passed through the villages of Eastwick & Gilston (photo is of the lovely St Mary's Church, Gilston). Lunch was at the traditional country pub The Crown Inn. The Crown Inn is a 'curious' pub - they came up with sandwiches eventually! Generally a good bright day - but some hailstones briefly - in April! The afternoon took us past Hundson Airfield & Gilston Park house then re joined the tow path of the river Stort. [Details](#).

May



Stort Valley Way - Part 3 This was a continuation of this circular route around Harlow Town. We did just over 12 miles but a lot of that was getting to and from the SVW. This time we set off from Harlow Mill to pick up the SVW close to Matching Tye which was also our lunch stop. Large main courses meant chips were left uneaten(!) but then we were told there were free desserts! We couldn't miss out. Is the walk about walking or about the lunches? Eventually we staggered on our way through the rolling Essex countryside. We still managed to catch an earlier bus back into Harlow Town where we again were on perfect timing to catch the train. [Details](#)



Wickford This is a lovely rural walk in the much maligned county of Essex - and it's only 30 mins from Stratford. The weather was perfect with blue skies and sunshine. Spring flowers were still in abundance, as were foals in the fields (this is the area for horse lovers) and there were plenty of fine far reaching views. An early pit stop was taken at the Essex Wildlife Trust's extensive nature reserve, prettily sited on the banks of East Hanningfield reservoir, and a great place for birdwatchers. Our later pub lunch was slightly mistimed as 23 walkers from Belsize Park U3A just beat us to it! [Details](#)



Tunbridge Wells Disruption on the trains didn't deter us on this bright sunny day. This was a varied circular High Weald walk of just over 10 miles, starting and ending in the elegant spa town of Royal Tunbridge Wells. The walk went through the charming village of Frant, stretches of parkland, restored heathland and woods and finished alongside the heritage Spa Valley Railway. While we nearly lost a group member en-route we did all manage to make it to the pub for lunch. After lunch we also traversed an RSPB nature reserve and walked alongside some impressive sandstone rock outcrops and the royal spa spot of High Rocks. [Details](#).

June



Hassocks to Lewes Another stretch of the South Downs Way starting at Hassocks, leaving the town a steady climb up to Jill and Jack windmills and there joined the SDW. While the weather wasn't brilliant it was clear enough for us to have great views south and north. With a learned member of the Bird Watching group with us we managed to spot or hear - Linnet, Yellow Hammer, White Throat - and at the top of Blackcap hill - a Blackcap! As we stayed on the ridge for a picnic lunch we made very good time. Which is just as well as when we got to the end at Lewes station we were greeted with train disruption going home. [Details](#).



Ockley to Warnham A small (but perfectly formed) group of half a dozen for this peaceful and relaxing walk of just over 10 miles in a tranquil area on the Surrey/ Sussex borders. We met one or two dog walkers, but otherwise shared the paths and fields only with the animals and birds. Much of the walk was through varied woodland, which provided plenty of shade on a warm, sunny day. The undergrowth at times suggested this was not a particularly well-trodden route and we could have done with Derek's machete on a few occasions. Only three of us ordered lunches at the welcoming inn, but that provided more than enough food for everyone to enjoy in the garden, once again under the shade of the trees. [Details](#).



Wivenhoe Circular - this was a repeat from 2104. This year the weather was not so good. However it didn't distract us from enjoying a figure of eight walk around Wivenhoe in Essex. First past timber clad houses in the village and then out along the Colne estuary - watching the lightning strikes in the distance. We could only dodge the rainclouds for so long but then the downpour hit us and we were happy to head for pub lunch back in Wivenhoe. After a bit of a dry out, we pushed out for the second half through some shaded woodland then looped back along the river to the start. [Details.](#)



Islington Boundary Walk (with a twist!) There was good overall support from iU3A for this charity event with 33 walking at least part of this walk. Six did the whole way. Both these numbers are higher than last year. Long Walks group of course was well represented. The "with a twist" this year did add a bit of extra distance to the boundary. The route shadowed the boundary but took in 18 green spaces. Distance was over 15 miles. Biggest attendance was for the Waterlow Park to Finsbury Park section. The weather was good - not too hot, no rain! There was a good gathering at the end at the Alwyne Castle. Details of the route [here](#). Some images from the walk route [here](#).



The Glass Sea - a very easy walk to get to and from on the Hertford East train from H&I. Starting from Gordon Hill this was a 10.5 mile circular walk - taking in part of the London Loop, part of the Hertfordshire Way and part of the Hertford Chain walk. We passed a few of the remaining greenhouses which gives the area its name. With all the recent rain we did hit some short patches of mud (in June!) but the level of brambles and nettles were the main problem - especially if you were in shorts... The walk was over rolling hills with views back to London. A repeat of a 2014 walk. A quick service over lunch meant we were ahead of schedule and even with a group size of 12 we were on a speedy pace. [Details.](#)

July



Richmond to Putney Our **100th walk** and our **Summer Social**. To celebrate we repeated the very first walk we did in November 2013. It was an easy 9 miles along the south side of the Thames on a glorious summer's day. 20 turned out for this walk - 3 of whom were on this walk when it was first done. All made it to the end where we had a late lunch by Putney bridge. There we did this year's awards. The criteria being - those that had walked more than 500 miles on these first 100 walks. Four qualified. Well done to all. There were a few close runners up who will also soon pass their 500 miles mark - where others are already on their way to their next 500 miles.... [Details.](#)



Cookham to Maidenhead A Baker's Dozen joined this warm and sunny walk. We'd very presciently planned a visit to our new PM's constituency the day after she took up office, although of greater interest, was the countryside that inspired the paintings of Stanley Spencer and Kenneth Grahame's *Wind in the Willows* (the picture shows what is reputed to be the Wild Wood from the latter). About half the group visited the Stanley Spencer gallery in Cookham and we all passed his former house as well as his gravestone. As a bonus, the Royal Barge *Gloriana* sailed serenely past as we strolled along the Thames path,

although there was no sign of Her Majesty aboard. [Details](#)



Chartridge 'Hills and Vales' This lovely Chilterns walk took place following the hottest day of the year so far, but it didn't deter 11 hardy walkers, all sensibly kitted out with their sun hats. The 9+ miles circular walk from Chesham, a pretty historic market town, covers a variety of undulating terrain from quiet country lanes through to many shady wooded areas. Unsurprisingly the uphill sections seemed rather more challenging than usual. However there was invariably a good patch of shade waiting at the top complete with wonderful views to enjoy while catching ones breath! This is a delightful walk and would be well worth repeating at other times of the year. [Details](#)

August



Cuffley — this was another "link" in the Hertfordshire Chain walk. Easy to get to the start of this walk, just up the Great Northern line from H&I. A repeat of this 2014 walk. 11 miles circular around Cuffley. Lovely weather — hence we were glad of the shade in the wooded sections. Road sections not too bad. The lunch time pub let us down — slow food service. None of the 13 went for the opt outs but some did for the tea option (in the Florist's shop) at the end. Further details: [Details](#).



Constable Country — a repeat of this popular 10 mile circular around Manningtree. 13 of us left Manningtree on the south side and headed out on the Essex Way along the Stour valley. Again the walk proved that Essex has some lovely countryside (but we did also cross over into Suffolk). The vote took us for an early lunch in picturesque Dedham where ice cream couldn't be resisted. The afternoon walk took in views over Dedham Vale (AONB) and we continued back through NT countryside to their property at Flatford Mill where tea was taken. After imagining the exact location for Constable's Haywain we proceeded back along the river to the station. [Details](#).



Princess Risborough and Wendover — splendid weather for another outing to the Chilterns on this walk of about 9 miles, mainly along the Ridgeway LDP. We were soon up and on the Ridgeway. Our group of ten (with an equal gender mix) enjoyed an early outdoor pub lunch with remarkably swift service (as you might expect when they claim visits from successive Prime Ministers). We later caught a glimpse of the PM's country residence at Chequers, waving at the security cameras as we crossed the drive. Then it was through woods and up to the Boer War monument on Coombe Hill, the highest point in the Chilterns at around 850 feet, and well worth it for the fine views. Some rushed to catch the train home, others

lingered for well-earned chocolate and cakes in Wendover. [Details](#).

September



Milford to Haslemere — quite a strenuous walk of around 12 miles on a (last?) warm day of summer. All eight participants (including one débutante) completed the full walk, including two or three steepish climbs. We passed lakes and heathland (including the Bagmoor Common Nature Reserve) with great views toward the North Downs and lots of colourful heather in the morning. Lunch was in the pretty village of Thursley - quickest food service ever! Then we went through the Devil's Punch Bowl to Hindhead and, fortified by a welcome cup of tea at the National Trust café, finally dropped down into Haslemere. [Details](#).

South Downs Way — In September we had our first two day walk. While we'd planned this for some time the RMT decided to threaten it by going on strike on Southern trains. However, not easily dissuaded 14 of us set out - and in the end there was no disruption to our walk. We were also blessed by two days of perfect weather - hot but with a breeze most of the way. Glorious views North and South all the way throughout the two days. We started at Amberley on the first day with 12 miles to Bramber. Sights on the way included Chanctonbury Ring and the Cissbury Ring. We left the SDW and took the Monarchs Way (not all 615 miles of it) down off the ridge to Bramber (with historic Norman castle). We spent the night in the Old Tollgate hotel with a soak in the bath being appreciated by many. Our private dining room allowed us to have a very convivial evening helped by a generous wine donation by one of the group. Nonetheless the next day we were all ready for an early departure for our 10 miles along the SDW. Sights today included the Devil's Dyke and a welcome stop at the cafe at NT Saddlescombe farm. Lunch wasn't long after at Pyecombe where we left the SDW and turned North to Hassocks. All trains were running and when our luggage arrived we were on our way back to London - tired but happy! For more photos of the walk click [here](#). [Details](#). Also for a description of the history of Chanctonbury Ring see [here](#).

Newport to Audley End — After an unexpectedly autumnal start, the temperature steadily climbed throughout the day to its predicted high of around 27 degrees. Thankfully this was a lovely easy walk on generally flat terrain with occasional welcome shady byways. A picnic lunch was taken in the churchyard of the delightful village of Clavering — which amongst its ancient buildings proudly boasts both the oldest house and the smallest house in Essex. After lunch, in spite of the heat, we set off at a smart pace to cover the 2.5 miles to picturesque Arkesden just in time to enjoy a relaxing drink at the Axe & Compasses. A further 3 miles, and the walk ended in the charming village of Wendens Ambo, home to Audley End station. [Details](#).



Watton-at-Stone to Welwyn North — A very tranquil walk in early autumn through surprisingly varied and undulating landscape — large tracts of peaceful deciduous woodland, hedgerows laden with hips and berries and harvested fields now ploughed. Five of us enjoyed the 11 miles between Watton-at-Stone and Welwyn North stations with rarely a stile to slow us down, although a couple of good hills got the heart pumping faster. Lunch in the pleasant garden of the Plume of Feathers was very reasonable and quickly served. Most of the walk was in deep countryside away from houses and roads. We became expert in identifying hornbeams, which were present in large numbers and so no longer have any excuse to confuse them with beech. The leaves on the trees not quite turning yet, but promising a wonderful display of colour a little later in the year and a walk well worth repeating in the spring when the characteristic bright green leaves of the new foliage make their appearance (& possibly in the opposite direction). [Details](#).

Saxon Shore Line — 13 miles from Gravesend to Higham in Kent. We were soon out of Gravesend pausing briefly at Pocahontas' grave. The breadth of the Thames is quite staggering. We looked across to Tilbury where one of our previous walks had finished then headed out East along the estuary. We passed MOD firing ranges then the older fortification of Shoremead Fort. As the river swept North we could see Coldhouse Fort on the far side and then we came to Cliffe fort. We had to keep giving advice to another walking group who seemed not to know the way (it is poorly signed in places). After this we were on the RSPB reserve of Cliffe Pools before we got to Cliffe village for lunch. Then we left the coastal path and struck inland through Kent orchards and some woodland to Higham. The small group made for a fast pace and an early train home. [Details](#).

