



Longer Walks (October 2022 to September 2023)

Here is a record of our iU3A longer walks in the year. 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 2022

Coulsdon and Happy Valley: Glorious sunny weather and early autumn colours when a dozen of us walked the eight mile circular route from Coulsdon south taking in Farthing Down and Happy Valley. En route we also saw the magnificent chapel from what was Netherne psychiatric hospital, now converted into a leisure centre, and the ancient church at Chaldon with its famous medieval wall paintings. A good lunch at The Fox, a historic inn, and an early enough arrival back at the station to enjoy ice creams in the park sunshine, made it a lovely outing. Details [here](#).

Holmwood to Gomshall: much of this lovely walk was through National Trust land, the broadleaf woods and heathland of Coldharbour and Abinger Common. We were 11 walkers and had a splendid time. We left Leith Hill and its steep climb up it well alone to make the walk more accessible for all. Weather was ok, cloudy and some sun but not cold. The colour of the leafy trees was splendid as was to be expected in October. The walk was largely easy going, steadily but not very steeply going up on sandy bridleways. The views were magnificent and it's worthwhile going back and do perhaps a Gomshall to Guilford or Dorking walk. Sadly we received a call, while still on the train, from the pub Wotton Hatch that their electricity was off and no food could be served. Luckily most of us had read the instructions and the recommended snack in their rucksack so we shared what we had between us. It did shorten the trip to most people's delight and we easily got the 3.20pm. Three had already left at lunchtime to take a bus because of evening activities. Details [here](#).

Chess Valley: Our walk leader, Stuart, had worked out a really interesting route through the Chilterns and the weather was perfect. The paths were good underfoot and the autumn scenes along the way were glorious. There were interesting stops along the way at Latimer House and the 12th Century Holy Cross Church with the mural depicting a scene from the life of Christ. Good pub for lunch and a great day out! Details [here](#).

Otford: unusually reliable and fast SE Rail transport took 10 of us to Otford Kent by 10.30am for the start of this 13k circular walk. Relatively short but in some parts rather challenging as much of the walk is up to and on the North Downs which on occasion led to slow progress. The walk was through much open countryside and mixed woodlands with wonderful views over the Darent valley and towards London and Canary Wharf. Rain threatened from time to time but the weather was generally good with some sun, and with the leaves changing in colour this was an excellent day of autumnal walking. A good lunch stop at The Crown in the village of Shoreham — a very attractive and historic village — left only a shortish walk back to Otford and an early return to Islington. Chocolates were, of course, on offer. Details [here](#)

November

Dover to Folkestone: the walk started in the worst possible circumstances. As the group got off the train at Dover station, the rain was torrential. Despite this there was near unanimity amongst the 10 of us that we get going now we were here. We were rewarded not just by rain but by a torrent rushing down half the busy B road we were walking beside and half way up the pavement. After 10 minutes we left the road,

headed uphill at the start of the Downs and into woods with plenty of tree cover so we were no longer drowning. After less than half an hour of a long steady wooded climb, we emerged at the top of the Downs with the rain almost finished and magnificent views back towards Dover and in particular to Dover Castle, Dover Harbour and the sea. We turned away from the sea and stayed high on the Downs for the next few miles with no rain and lovely downland views, finally heading towards the sea again at Capel le Ferne, where we stopped for a simple but very agreeable lunch at the almost empty Battle of Britain museum there, with wonderful views (we were at clifftop height) across the Channel. After lunch, we started with a clifftop walk then a fairly steep descent towards Folkestone, passing a Martello Tower and then at sea level briefly walking along the promenade past the harbour into the old town, where everyone partook of tea and cake, finishing with a 15 minute walk to the station and the right train back. Details [here](#).

Bishops Stortford to Roydon: a misty morning found 17 of us walking through the gentle countryside alongside the River Stort. Starting at Bishops Stortford we reached Harlow Mill for lunch at the Beefeater, and then made our way along the river again to Harlow Town where the walk finished. As there was still some light, six people continued to Roydon and caught the train home from there. An atmospheric peaceful autumn day, still with good leaf cover on the trees and the occasional watery sounds of coot and mallard on the river. Details [here](#).

Bayford: even with a relatively early start attempting an 11½ mile walk at this time of year was risky to finish before darkness. The first challenge to this was that only some trains on the way out stopped at Bayford. But this only meant we were about 15 mins late when we set out from Bayford station for Links 3 & 4 on the Hertfordshire Chain Walk. Still many autumn colours on the trees and a mild temperature. Our next time challenge was lunch at the pub — slow service meant we were 75 mins over lunch, with the picnickers getting edgy. And it was rather pricey. The afternoon was more of rolling countryside with some woods and some open vistas. However, even with these time challenges we did just about get on the train before darkness hit us (if only the train hadn't been delayed 30 mins). Details [here](#).

Ashford to Wye: no report. Details [here](#).

Sevenoaks: We were 13 at Sevenoaks station to start a walk through a lovely part of the Kentish countryside, starting by passing through the deer park of the National Trust-owned Knole House and then carrying on into a gentle area of fields and woods. We then descended through newly coppiced woodland to Ightham Mote, a rare, moated manor house, also owned by the NT, where we had a simple but hearty lunch in the cafe. Then followed the best part. Not only did the wonderful warm sun come out on a crisp day but we also walked a wonderful stretch of the Greensand Way which slowly climbs the escarpment of the Kent Downs, with superb views over the Weald to the south. We saw the last of the autumn colours thanks to a very warm October and mild November with plenty of golden beeches and sweet chestnuts, whose leaves turn a lovely yellowy-gold. Finally we passed through Knole Park again in glorious evening sun and the curious deer watching us. An excellent day out close to London. Details [here](#).

December



Finchley to Highbury, Christmas walk 2022: 18 of us faced the snowy icy paths through some of North London's parks for this enjoyable walk. The snow hung on the trees giving it a very Christmassy feel. We gathered at East Finchley station with some in more festive dress than others, but we still managed to attract many stares and smiles as we wound our way along this part of the Capital Ring. A fuel stop (hot chocolate or coffee) was needed at Finsbury Park after the Parkland Walk to warm up and regroup. Then we did the last leg with a slight detour (as part of Gillespie Park was closed) to weave through to end at Highbury Corner at the Brewhouse for our Christmas lunch, where a few other members joined us. The cracker jokes were as corny as ever but added to the cheer and the food was much appreciated. Would this be the last walk for us this year or not? Details

[here](#).

Hertford North to Watton-at-Stone: Only five attended the last walk before Christmas, and it was a very enjoyable 9¾ miles, mostly beside the River Beane, where a kingfisher and heron were spotted. Light drizzle at first, but it eased off after an hour. The river water was quite high because of the melted snow and ice. We were fed and watered at the George and Dragon, Watton-at-Stone, then a quite windy four miles in the afternoon, reaching a trig point (118 metres above sea level) on part of the Chain Walk north of Watton. We made the 3.39pm train home with ten minutes to spare. Details [here](#).

January 2023

Colne Valley: we avoided trains and travel disruption by using the Metropolitan line to take us to Rickmansworth for our first walk of 2023. From there we picked up the Grand Union Canal and headed south. Most of the time we followed the canal with water on both sides, either the river Colne or various reservoirs. We left the canal to climb up to our lunchtime stop close to Harefield. We arrived early and got very quick service; hence we were on our way again very promptly. We marvelled (?) at the engineering feat of HS2 and the long viaducts that spanned the vast watery ponds. Fran's Tea Shop toward the end was closed unfortunately but instead many of us stopped for tea in Uxbridge. Details [here](#).

Richmond to Hampton Court: a select group of six of us set off in rain from Richmond station, dropped down to the river, and eventually found a cafe open for coffee. The rain gradually eased, and we continued along the Thames path past Ham House and Teddington Lock, with a very swollen river alongside, to a mainly vegetarian and delicious lunch at the Comptoir Libanais by Kingston Bridge. Swift service allowed us to move on after only an hour to enter Hampton Court Park, where we found very early daffodils flowering. The rain had ceased, and we walked up Long Water to the back of the Palace before rejoining the Thames path, and crossing Hampton Bridge to the railway station, an early tea and our train back. Details [here](#).

Tring: eleven of us travelled to Tring to start an unfamiliar walk in a familiar area. We walked North via the Tring golf course on to an undulating path halfway along the Ridge with wonderful wide open views down the valley towards Tring. Once past the Bridgewater Monument, we were truly in Ashridge Park woods before reaching Little Gaddesden for lunch in the Bridgewater Arms. Return was via the Capability Brown designed landscaped gardens and meadows of the Ashridge estate to the charming train station in Berkhamsted. Very sunny day, lovely views and good lunch. Details [here](#).

Broxbourne to Cheshunt: with two walk leaders absent or indisposed, Pia stepped in to take fifteen of us down the Lea Valley for a wonderful walk along water-filled gravel

pits with birds skating on ice or swimming in the water, a Bittern at the Bird Discovery centre, lakes teeming with ducks, coots and the occasional Swan. We wavered between the navigable Lee canal and the river Lea over meadows but blissfully always on dry (tarmac) paths. We split up for lunch between The Crown Pub and The Abbey Cafe; both were simple but adequate. The return was short and sweet via a different route back to Cheshunt for our train. Dry and later sunny but it remained fairly cold throughout. Details [here](#).

February

Welwyn: from Welywn North we headed north-east through attractive Hertfordshire countryside, to make a clockwise circular loop through pretty villages and Locksley Wood, Harmer Green, and Datchworth. This was our biggest group (20) for a long time, which meant a challenge not losing anyone en route. The pub at Bulls Green did a good job coping with the large group. After lunch we continued through Burnham Green with some dropping out at Welwyn North while the rest of the group continued for a further 2+ miles passing under the historic 40-arched Digswell viaduct, crossing the river Mimram, through Digswell Park and Sherrardspark Wood to end at Welwyn Garden City station. Details [here](#).

Cockfosters to Enfield, London Loop, Section 17: the walk from Cockfosters to Enfield Lock was over the terrain of Enfield Chase, which centuries ago was heavily wooded and a favourite hunting ground of royalty. This is now being extensively re-wilded and thousands of young trees were in evidence. Dry underfoot and overhead it was perfect walking conditions for 15 of us. Apart from the interesting features of the obelisk, a previously inhabited moated island, the site where Sir Walter Raleigh supposedly put down his cloak over a puddle for Elizabeth I, and lunch in the oldest inn in Enfield, we saw tree creeper, red kite, buzzard and a kingfisher. Details [here](#).

Cheshunt to Broxbourne: this was our 400th walk!! Our walk began at Cheshunt in weather best described as "almost rain" where you feel but can't see moisture on your face. This is OK for walking and it stayed with us on and off for the day. We headed immediately into light managed woodlands, past small to medium sized lakes on good dry paths, all features of the whole walk. Crossing the Lee navigation canal we walked through the very agreeable Lee Valley Country Park, alongside much water and many birds, exiting into open farmland and following Route 1, the UK's premier cycle route, but cycleless on our walk, for a few miles. Our one gentle climb took us up Clayton Hill from which there are superb views to the lower, flatter countryside to the west, and down into Nazeing. We stayed on flat easy, canal and riverside terrain for the remainder of the walk, stopping at the Fish and Eels pub beside picturesque Dobbs Weir for lunch. After that we headed along the river to the next unnamed weir, by Glen Faba on the OS map, where the Lee and Stour rivers meet, more spectacular but less picturesque than Dobbs Weir. That brought us to Rye House Station, where two walkers left to get the train back. We now turned south and followed the Lee navigation canal path back to Broxbourne, even managing to successfully negotiate an unanticipated diversion as major building work was happening along a stretch of the canal. Finally, to Broxbourne and an easy journey back to Islington. Details [here](#).

Benfleet: this was a 9.6 mile walk via Leigh on Sea, Essex. A hilly, morning walk of 5.6 miles to Leigh, and then after lunch, it was a flat creek-side walk to return to Benfleet. Details [here](#).

Misbourne Vally: this was a straightforward eight mile 'downhill' walk alongside the Misbourne river. We started at Amersham-on-the-Hill walking down to Amersham Old Town, then picked up the valley and followed the river through fields and meadows to Chalfont St Giles. Lunch was at the much improved Merlin's Cave pub. After lunch we carried on down the valley crossing over to the east bank, through the golf course to Gerrards Cross. Details [here](#).

March

Chartham to Canterbury: the day got off to a challenging start as the train from London was late and so the connecting train at Ashford had gone. The group very cleverly decided to stay on the train, a fast one to Canterbury, and then almost immediately caught a slower train back in the opposite direction to Chartham, where we arrived only a few minutes later than planned to meet the day's leader, Jan. It was a greyish day but fine for walking, as we progressed through a quiet, pretty and relatively unknown stretch of the rolling North Downs, south of the more famous North Downs and Pilgrims Way. We arrived at the Granville pub just after 1.00pm for a very pleasant pub lunch, after which two of our company departed by bus into Canterbury and an early train home. The rest of us headed a little higher with great distant views towards Canterbury and beyond till we came in sight of the mighty 12 feet wide River Stour, to which we made a perilous but rewarding descent skirting a major new building site, the existence of which had selfishly caused our path to be diverted. Once down to the Stour, we followed the Stour Valley Way for just over two miles on a flat, even, partly tarmacked path, making for an easy finish to our walk at Canterbury West Station in good time for the planned 5.20pm train. A tiny bit short of 10 miles. Details [here](#).

Epping to Chingford: despite forecasts of rain all morning (which proved correct) 11 people attended the walk, and very enjoyable it was. The morning walk was mainly along good, gravelled path until south-east of Loughton Camp iron-age settlement, at which point an undefined and very muddy path was followed uphill to Loughton Camp itself. Here the path improved, and was followed across Epping New Road and then to the King's Oak pub where, despite being very wet, we were made very welcome. After some good food we continued the walk with actual sunshine along good gravelled paths until more mud between Magpie Hill and Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge. We arrived at Chingford Station in good time for the 3.25pm train home. Details [here](#).

Guildford to Gomshall: eleven of us walked under grey but dry sky and in plenty of mud to explore the lovely ridges and valleys East of Guildford: the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. After a steep start out of Guildford we got to the dramatic viewpoint of Pewley Down followed by walking the North Downs Way to climb to the hilltop church of St Martha-on-the-Hill with another stunning view. Then via the Pilgrims' Way along the Downs to lunch in the pretty village of Shere at the White Horse, which really came up trumps with a quick service of delicious food. Just before we reached Gomshall we turned northwards to do some serious walking uphill through lovely woods. Got the 4.30pm back to London. Great day in beautiful landscape. Details [here](#).

Princes Risborough to Great Missenden: the rain in the morning contributed to making this a very muddy walk. However, it was good to be back in the rolling Chilterns with great views. The Saturday Walkers Club route toughness source was certainly correct at a '7'. Time to dry out a bit at the walker-friendly pub, The Gate at Bryant's Bottom. Drier in the afternoon. Last walked in 2015. Details [here](#).

April

Totteridge Circular: bright spring sunshine all day and a coffee at the start raised the spirits of 14 walkers as we braved the mud and occasional unplanned deviations from the proposed route on this surprisingly rural terrain in Barnet. Blackthorn was in full bloom, and other early signs of spring were evident from trees, birds and flowers. Lunch in the garden of the Adam and Eve in Mill Hill was tasty and quickly served. The remainder of the 9+ miles was easier underfoot and got us back via part of the London Loop to Totteridge and Whetstone station for 4.00pm. Details [here](#).

Golders Green to Regent's Park: Poppy stood in as Leader to make sure we continued our unbroken record of delivering a walk a week. Thanks! This was an urban walk but linked in many North London green spaces. We started from Golders Green Tube Station and then soon were in Golders Hill Park then West Heath, Hill Gardens, Sandy Heath, then over to Hampstead Heath, via Parliament Hill. From there after lunch

we wound our way to end in Regent's Park.

Berkhamsted Circular: this was a nine mile walk through Berkhamsted Common to Ashridge Estate, with lunch at Bridgewater Monument Cafe and return via the Grand Union Canal. Details [here](#).

Wivenhoe: this was a nine miler, centred around the attractive boating and fishing village of Wivenhoe. In spite of some early drizzle the weather cleared to become warm and pleasant, so we were able to enjoy the river views, the abundance of spring flowers, and test our bird song identification skills. Lunch was split across two local pubs and completed in good time to continue to Wivenhoe Woods for a magnificent display of English bluebells. In spite of having made a lengthy detour to the morning's walk due to a severely flooded footpath, we still managed to return to the station in good time for an early train. Details [here](#).

May

Tunbridge Wells: on the only dry sunny day of the week 15 of us (including our two local guest leaders) enjoyed stunning woodland, bluebells, panoramic views and excellent food at The George on our 11 mile circular walk around Tunbridge Wells. Previously walked in 2019 the area had retained its rural feel and we were again charmed by the elegant architecture of the town on our way back to the station. Details [here](#).

Cheshunt to Epping: a group of 15 of us set off from Cheshunt in reasonable but fairly chilly weather. We walked for a mile or so through Lea Valley Country park with its multiple lakes, streams, waterbirds and trees: a great start. Heading east into fields, we soon began climbing only to find that our footpath was doubling as a part stream, part bog. By the time we reached the hilltop, most of us had wet shoes and many wet socks, but we were still rewarded with great views looking south to the Thames and east London. We now crossed into Essex and descended gently, but with repeated panoramic views southwards. Our lunch pub was the very agreeable Horseshoes at Upshire. After lunch we followed a pleasant but again very muddy and squelchy path over the M25 and into Epping Forest. As we went in, we saw, a field away, a herd of about 100 deer, also heading for the forest. Once in the forest, things got drier and we were able to wander relatively freely in the desired direction as the undergrowth was very low. The trees coming into leaf were also superb. We even crossed through a prehistoric hill fort called Ambresbury Banks before finally reaching Epping and the tube back. A very good if soggy day's walking! Details [here](#).

Crews Hill: a repeat of this popular Hertfordshire walk, a link in the 'chain walk', 9 miles with some minor undulations. We were blessed with sun all day, possibly the best day of the year so far, which meant that there were no muddy bits, but some heavy growth in spots. It turned out to be a bit of a bird-spotting outing as well with, apart from the common species, a pied wagtail, lapwings, chiffchaffs, wren, red kites, being seen or heard. The highlight was a kestrel, with support, dive bombing a buzzard. Details [here](#).

June

Hollingbourne: from the station we crossed fields to then climb up to the ridge and joined the North Downs Way. Then we continued along to the Woodland Trust's Hucking Estate, an unexpected oasis of grassland and woodland. We had our lunch at the Hook and Hatchet Inn at Hucking. After lunch we dropped back down the hillside to Upper Street, one of the three settlements which make up Hollingbourne village, before returning to the station. Details [here](#).

Henley: eleven of us took the Elizabeth Line to Twyford, and the Regatta train link on to Henley-on-Thames to join the Thames Path there. Preparations for the Regatta were in full swing for some way along the river, with numerous rowers practising. An exciting walk across the weir bridge at Mill End took us into fields filled with sheep and lambs

before we reached the charming village of Hambledon, and the Stag and Huntsman pub. A warm welcome, with quick and efficient service, gave us an excellent lunch in record time in the pub garden. Red kites swooped to grab the sandwich of one member, and seemed alarmingly large close to (5 foot wing span) when one attempted the same in the pub garden! Details [here](#).

One of our number returned to Henley along the river, while the remaining 10 climbed a long and gentle hill through beech woods on the Shakespeare Way to reach Fawley, where the old flint church had 2 large mausoleums in its graveyard. A quiet walk along a ridgetop lane gave way to fields and a long, gentle descent back into Henley on the Oxfordshire Way, through a fine park with specimen trees. Five of us stayed on to enjoy a much-needed tea and cakes before the easy return journey. (10½ miles). Details [here](#).

Goring & Streatley: one of the hottest days of the year so far (made pleasant by a light breeze and plenty of shade en route) saw 9 of us enjoying this walk of two halves. Goring and Streatley are separated by the Thames with the station in Goring where we started the Chiltern & Thames Path loop of this figure of 8, initially uphill to the ridge above the river with lovely views across the valley, then downhill via Hartslock Nature Reserve (with a fine display of common orchids) to the Thames Path and a riverside walk back to the bridge linking the two villages. We crossed to Streatley for a welcome pub lunch before tackling the North Wessex Downs loop. A fairly steep uphill climb at the hottest part of the day tested us all! This took us on to a lovely wooded ridge which soon opened up onto downland with commanding views over both G&S and south Oxfordshire. A final steep downhill to cross the river back into Goring, then tea, cake or ice cream before boarding a wonderfully air-conned train back to Paddington. Details [here](#).

Wye to Chartham: this was another excellent Kent walk of just over 10 miles. The morning walk was through beautiful, empty, rolling downland, with lovely flower-filled meadows, some arable and one or two woodland paths. We descended from the Downs to cross the River Stour, at the small village of Godmersham. Then we headed along quiet country lanes to the lovely hilltop village square at Chilham where we stopped for lunch. The shorter afternoon section kept us close to the Stour, bringing us to the Chartham and then onward to the station. Details [here](#).

Kelvedon, Essex: this walk proved to be definitely worth repeating since we did it in February 2022, although the route was slightly different from then. Apart from a good variety of countryside there were many interesting buildings to view and history to learn (through Derek's 'interesting facts'). We followed the Blackwater as it meandered toward the coast. This undemanding 9 mile walk took in two of the more attractive villages in Essex, Coggeshall and Kelvedon, with many listed buildings. Details [here](#).

July

Sunningdale to Windsor: nine of us met up at Waterloo and took the train to Sunningdale, where we made our way through the village to Colworth Park, with its polo playing fields and a wonderful wildflower meadow, before entering the 4,800 acres of Windsor Great Park. We skirted Virginia Water and then entered the immaculately maintained Valley Gardens, which deserve to be revisited during rhododendron season. The next landmark was a 100-foot-high totem pole, a gift to Queen Elizabeth II from British Columbia, from which we proceeded, through light woodland and more open grassy areas, to the Savill Gardens Visitor Centre for lunch in the cafe.

After lunch, the first highlight was Cow Pond, home to a fabulous array of waterlilies among which ducklings were wending their way and a mob of adolescent geese paraded. Past the Royal Lodge we entered the Royal Deer Park (yes, we did see deer) and followed the Long Walk all the way to the gates of Windsor Castle. Our walk finished with a meander through some of Windsor's oldest streets, including the

shortest street in England, to the 2 railway stations and trains back to London. Details [here](#).

New River Path and Summer Social: last walked in August 2015 (when it rained virtually all the way!) we tried this local 9 mile walk again. This time the weather was fine, which suited the 27 walkers. It was good to see some 'older' members returning and a welcome to the 3 new 'first timers'. We started at Winchmore Hill and ended at the Canonbury Tavern, broadly following the New River path all the way, which of course meant it was a mixture of rural and urban stretches. If a section was becoming a bit boring then the Leader was always ready with an 'Interesting Fact' about the New River's creation. Then of course, the highlight, when we were all gathered at the Canonbury, the annual award of our LW Cup. It was presented from last year's winner (Stuart) to this year's winner (Rachel). Each year it's awarded on a different criterion and this year's criterion created much amusement. Details [here](#).

Cookham/Maidenhead: this was a figure of 9 (or lollipop) walk. We started at Cookham station and headed west away from the village centre via Cookham Dene to make the morning 'loop' via hills and woods. Winter Hill was the highest point on the walk. Details [here](#).

Ham Street to Westenhanger: it's a long and expensive ride to Kent, but somehow when you get there, Jan makes it all worthwhile. He never fails to create a route which is new and interesting.

This 11+ mile walk was no exception. It was a real adventure. I really don't know how he finds or follows these paths, ducking and diving through overgrown and hidden tracks. I'm pleased to say that there were no steep or high hills, but I have to admit there were loads of stiles! The pub lunch was excellent as was the company. Great day out! Details [here](#).

New River, Theobalds to Ware: regardless of the title for this walk, we were hardly ever on the New River path. It was a disaster of a walk. The troubles began right from the beginning, as we tried to get from the station to the river. We encountered our first housing estate with no way out the other end, then, regardless of the map, a new fence blocked the path into Theobalds Park, which meant re-tracing our steps and the first bit of unexpected road walking. Once we reached the river we were immediately confronted with closure of the path (it's being upgraded!). Another detour ensued. We tried to get back on the path at several places just to encounter more path sections closed, meaning more road walking. Eventually the decision was taken to abort the planned route and to cut across to the River Lea and follow that north to Broxbourne. While we had a bit of luck finding a good pub, again the map let us down in trying to find a rail crossing into the Lee Valley park. The third crossing point attempt was successful and at last we started on the uninterrupted walk along the River Lea. With the initial delays the last stalwarts called it a day at 12 miles (at Rye House).

August

Chalfont & Latimer: this was a 9 mile walk centred on the Chess Valley, an area of outstanding natural beauty in the Chilterns. It had a mix of woodland, valley views, interesting architecture and riverside paths. What more could you ask for! Details [here](#).

Bayford & Little Berkhamstead: while we know this area well and have had many walks in the area, Michael found a new interesting route. Always a good area but the route particularly led us through a mixture of paths, tracks, side roads through rolling Hertfordshire countryside. A big group (19), a record for a while. But the pub, the Five Horseshoes pub in the village of Little Berkhamsted, did very well with quick service. Afternoon we passed Culver Wood, Robins Nest Hill and Great Stockings. Details [here](#).

New Malden to Isleworth: fourteen of us set off from New Malden station in perfect weather. Although many of us are familiar with the major walks in SW London (Capital Ring, Thames Path) this was a variation from the norm, along the clear stream of

Beverley Brook as it passes through the heavily wooded western part of Wimbledon Common, and then on to the oak grove War Memorial, a calm place to rest. Soon we crossed into Richmond Park, through less commonly walked bracken paths and the Isabella Plantation to Ham Common Woods. At the New Inn on the common itself, we had an efficiently presented lunch, then via Ham House's long walks and the back lanes of Petersham to the Thames, and finally via Richmond Green to the station and home. Details [here](#).

South Downs Way, Hassocks to Lewes: Derek did a thorough job of all the preparations for the walk and then handed over to Sara and Jo-Ann. Quite a responsibility! We started well setting off from the station, despite the challenge of the station — our exit being via an underpass outside the turnstile! It was a steep start, but that was soon behind us. It was perfect weather for a walk and there were lovely views from the South Downs ridge. We had all brought a picnic, which was ideal as just after Ditchling Beacon we found a "pink campervan" stall selling drinks and snacks. Also with picnic tables and a porta-loo. Perfect! Then continuing along the ridge, we left the SDW and dropped down from the ridge to Lewes. It wasn't that steep. We had a nice walk through the town before arriving at the station. Nothing was open in Lewes but the station never disappoints and those that wanted a drink or cake were able to satisfy their needs. It was a great choice of walk for a public holiday as all day was off-peak and we were able to travel on the tube with our freedom card and start our journey on the train well before 9:30. Details [here](#).

September

Witley to Haslemere: 12 of us caught the train to Witley on what was forecast to be one of the hottest days of the summer. In the event, we were lucky with cloudy skies, and plenty of shade on much of the 8.5 mile walk through Surrey's gentle and verdant Low Weald. We had a somewhat slow lunch at the Swan in Chiddingfold, after which we lost one of our number. We ambled on to Haslemere, with frequent pauses for water and blackberries, and arrived in good time for most of us to have an excellent tea with home-made cakes before catching a fast train back to Waterloo. No-one collapsed with the heat, and we all felt that we'd succeeded in having a good day. Details [here](#).

River Lea: this was a straightforward walk from Tottenham to Islington along river and canals led by a new Walk Leader. Some of us knew parts of the walk, so we managed to find our way out of Walthamstow Wetlands and to spot the café. 'Here East' looked after us very well, and all seemed happy with the service. We made pretty good progress after lunch and I think we reached Noel Road by soon after 2.30. All seemed pretty fit and there were no stragglers. Regents Canal was a bit tricky in places, because of cyclists and low bridges. The weather was still fine for this mid September walk. Details [here](#).

Wakes Colne to Bures: this was a lovely 11 mile walk around the Colne valley in Essex. Undeterred by weather warnings of high winds and rain, seven of us enjoyed a warm sunny breezy morning with serious rain only coming in as we neared the end point at Bures. Starting at the pretty station of Chappel & Wakes Colne, which is also an interesting railway museum, this walk has lots of variety as it meanders through lovely countryside dotted with archetypal village and rural architecture, lakes, river, woods, fields and quiet lanes. Details [here](#).

Lewes to Saltdean: with some summer sunshine still this walk proved to be as glorious as expected. The South Downs always provides great views. The route rose quickly out of Lewes to the chalk grassland ridge. No one took up the walk options, all proceeding south to the coast. Details [here](#).