

CEC Walking Section Report for 2018

This year we have had five well attended regular Saturday walks, a Charity Walk in support of SARAID, two special ICE 200 Walks and a successful Walking Weekend in Dorset. Five regular Saturday walks are planned for 2019 together with a Walking Weekend in the Gower Peninsular in June.

13th January 2018 - The walk started from St James' Park Tube Station, passed along Queen Anne's Gate, crossed St James' Park, went along The Mall and Pall Mall, took a detour into St James' Square before arriving at Green Park. We then went to Holborn Kingsway for lunch at Shakespeare's Head and neighbouring eating places via Regent St, Carnaby St, Piccadilly Circus, Leicester Square and Covent Garden.

After lunch we walked through Lincoln's Inn Fields to Fleet St, visiting Twinings before passing Ben Johnsons residence, listening to the talking cat and visiting Paternoster Square, finishing at Postman's Park King Edward St.

A total of 45 people took part.

Thanks to Haydn Davies for arranging the walk and providing an excellent and interesting commentary.

SARAID Charity Walk 17th February 2018 - The group met outside Café Nero near Oxford Circus where our guides Peter Heath, Public Realm Director and Maitreyee Kaushal, Urban Designer of Atkins explained the history of Regents Street created by John Nash in the early 19th century on behalf of the Prince Regent who was later to become King George IV. Peter also explained how he has been involved with the improvement of the area to accommodate modern day requirements for increased traffic and pedestrian activity.

The route headed south along Regents Street with stops at Oxford Circus and along the route to observe places of interest including Piccadilly Circus before finishing at Waterloo Place.

A total of 12 people took part.

Thanks to Peter Heath for leading the walk and providing an excellent and interesting commentary. Thanks also to those who joined us and to those who have made donations on behalf of SARAID.

7th April 2018 - The walk started from Hatch End Railway Station. We followed a roadside footpath leading to the London Loop. The route led alongside and across fields to Grim's Dyke an ancient earthwork monument and on to the grounds of the house of the same name which was once the residence of WS Gilbert of Gilbert and Sullivan fame, now a Best Western Hotel. We then walked through the grounds by Bentley Priory, the headquarters of Fighter Command in World War II and on to the Fishery pub for lunch.

After lunch we walked alongside the lake in the park and then on to our final destination, Elstree and Borehamwood Railway Station.

A total of 22 people took part.

Thanks to Richard Lucas for arranging the walk and arranging an excellent lunch venue.

ICE 200 Walk from Rochester 21st April 2018 This walk had been planned for March, but it had to be postponed because of snow. The walk started from Rochester Railway Station, stopping briefly to admire Rochester Bridge House, the view of the river and the bridges about which Stewart gave a brief history. After crossing the bridge into Strood, we followed roads and footpaths leading to the HS1 and the M2 motorway bridges, passing Templar Manor on the way.

We walked across the bridge with its excellent views of the River Medway and Rochester. We returned to Rochester via a riverside path and saw the apartments which now occupy the site of the Short Bros Aircraft Factory and the remains of a slipway which had been used for launching flying boats into the river.

Some of us stopped for lunch in Rochester before visiting the Bridge Trust Exhibition in the newly restored Crypt of the Cathedral.

A total of 25 people took part.

Thanks to Stewart and Sally Biggs for arranging the walk and providing such an excellent commentary.

19th May 2018 - The walk started from Richmond Railway Station and took a route across Richmond Green to the Thames Path, which we followed passing beneath the railway and Twickenham road bridges, alongside Kew Gardens and Richmond Lock. We could see Syon Park and the entrance to the Grand Union Canal on the opposite bank, before reaching Kew bridge. At Chiswick bridge we saw the marker post for the end of the Cambridge/Oxford Boat Race. We stopped for lunch at the Bulls Head at Barnes.

After lunch we continued along the Thames Path, past the grounds of St Paul's Preparatory School, the former Harrods Depository building, which has now been converted to apartments, and several Rowing Clubs before reaching Putney.

This walk was the first of four Thames Path walks which are planned to finish at the Thames Barrier.

A total of 31 people took part.

Thanks to Mike Packer for arranging the walk and an excellent lunch venue.

Walking Weekend - Friday 8th /Sunday 10th June 2018 - The weekend commenced on Friday evening with a short walk around Dorchester to see some of the sights before we had an excellent dinner at the Kao San Thai Restaurant, Dorchester.

On Saturday, we met at the National Trust, Hardy's Visitor Centre at Higher Bockhamton.

There were 17 walkers who had travelled from Preston, Southampton, London, Kent and Surrey. We took a footpath through the woods to Hardy's Cottage and on through Puddletown Forest, Lower Bockhamton, crossing the bridge over the River Frome, passing by watermeadows and Stafford House on our way to West Stafford for lunch at "The Wise Man".

After lunch, we returned to Higher Bockhamton via Hardy Way, taking a detour into the graveyard at Stinsford church to see the gravestone of Thomas Hardy, before passing through the grounds of Kingston Maurward Park having covered a distance of 10miles. On Saturday evening, we met for a meal at the Wessex Royale Hotel, Dorchester.

On Sunday, the walk started from the car park by the Brewer's Arms in Martinstown with 16 walkers. We headed south up Bronkham Hill where we saw an early Bronze Age Cemetery. The path joined the Dorset Ridgeway which took us towards the Hardy Monument which some of us climbed. We returned to Martinstown via another path to have lunch at the Brewer's Arms having covered 6 miles.

Thanks to Duncan and Elizabeth Hyde for planning and leading the walk on Saturday and to Ray Sterry for arranging the evening meals and planning and leading the walk on Sunday and to all who made the effort to join us for such an enjoyable and successful weekend. We hope to arrange another event next year in June.

ICE 200 Walk - East Section of Tideway Project 1st September 2018

The east section of the Tideway Project runs from Blackfriars and finishes at the new Abbey Mills pumping station.

The walk started from the House Mill at Three Mills. After a short detour, we walked along Limehouse Cut to the River Thames via Limehouse Basin. This is the route of the Tideway tunnel to the King Edward Memorial Park Foreshore site, where we saw the ventilation shaft for the Rotherhithe Tunnel in the park. We also saw, from the public footpath, the temporary cofferdam for the Tideway shaft construction. After lunch at the Captain Kidd in Wapping, we followed the Thames Path and saw the shaft to the Thames Tunnel of 1868 near the Tower of London. We crossed the river over Southwark Bridge and finished the walk near the Globe Theatre.

A total of 23 people took part.

Thanks to Divik Bandopadhyaya for arranging the walk and providing such an excellent commentary and description of the Tideway Project.

22nd September 2018 - The walk started from Sole Street Railway Station and through Camer Park and on to a path across fields and country lanes leading us to Luddesdown. We visited the church and were able to see inside the 14th century tower. We then made our way through fields and by orchards to Cobham for lunch at the Leather Bottle.

After lunch we walked to the 18th century Mausoleum, which had been built for the Darnley family, where we were met by Jonathan Ireland the National Trust Ranger, who gave us a short talk about it. We then returned to Sole Street Railway Station making a brief visit to see Cobham church on the way.

A total of 24 people took part.

Thanks to John Coplestone for arranging the walk and the excellent lunch venue.

10th November 2018 - The walk started from Hampstead Underground Station. The route went up Heath Street to Hampstead Heath where we saw the location of the source of the River Westbourne. The path generally followed the route of the culverted river to Little Venice via Maida Vale. After stopping for lunch by the Paddington Basin, we went to Kensington Gardens via Paddington Station. We walked along the side of The Long Water and The Serpentine to reach the dam where a short section of open river flowed towards Knightsbridge. The walk finished at Sloane Square.

A total of 31 people took part.

Thanks to Graham Bessant for arranging the walk and providing such an interesting commentary.

Thanks to all our leaders for arranging such enjoyable walks.

Dates for 2019	12th January 2019	London
	6th April 2019	West Malling
	18th May 2019	River Thames - Putney
	21st September 2019	(details tba)
	9 th November 2019	(details tba)
	8th / 9th June Walking Weekend – Gower Peninsular	(details tba)

Tony Barber
December 2018