**Capital Ring Weekend Part 1 – Richmond to Highgate, Saturday 24th August 2013**

17 walkers, 25 miles – leader Susanne Waldschmidt

The day dawned drizzly but in spite of the weather 17 turned up at Richmond station, some to devote the entire weekend to the challenge of completing the 78 miles of the Capital Ring. The drizzle turned to light rain but it didn’t seem to deter anyone and even added a little atmosphere to the trudge along the Grand Union Canal. Then without warning, the heavens opened and torrential rain poured down. The situation looked desperate. Then a vision appeared, a large red sign saying WELCOME The Ballot Box. We democratically elected to enter. The staff seemed unfazed by the appearance of what looked like 17 drowned rats and soon we were enjoying a long, leisurely and dry lunch (sod the picnic sandwiches). The rain eased and the party continued but further trials were yet to come, namely the Cherry Tree Walk toilets, the stench from which bore no relationship at all to the delicate scent suggested by their name. Undaunted by the day’s difficulties we all arrived at Highgate with no losses and no drop-outs whatsoever.