**Woods, Waterways and Lakes, Thursday 15th October 2020**

6 walkers, 15.8 miles – leader Godfrey O’Callaghan

6 walkers turned out on the day. Starting from central Harrow we explored some of the greener parts and related them to the past history of the town which is typical of how London expanded during the periods following the Roman presence. Next we visited Pinner – a more eye-catching village within the borough – and passing the house once owned by Lord Nelson’s grandson and museum celebrating W. Heath Robinson.

To move from suburbs to countryside we joined the Celandine Walk along the River Pinn to Eastcote House Gardens and then to Ruislip Woods and Lido where we stopped for lunch. At that point rain (which was not forecast at all) began to pour down upon us and kept it up for the next hour. The walk, though, continued through woodland for much of that time and the trees offered protection. Ruislip Woods are in fact three different woods – with the other two being Mad Bess Woods and Bayhurst Woods. This part of the walk followed the Hillingdon Trail to Harefield, the Grand Union Canal and the Colne Valley Way. At Harefield church we stopped to visit the ANZAC cemetery and one of two graves of people awarded a VC. After following the canal with the Colne River for a while we turned onto lakeside paths to pass around three lakes. The River Colne flows through this low-lying area and the paths were often the only separation between lakeside and river. The lakes are old gravel pits and are now either nature reserves or, in the case of Bury Lake at Rickmansworth, an aquadrome. It was then a short walk to the station for some and to Wetherspoons for others. Despite the rain a pleasant and scenic walk with a good deal of variety.

Dave Williams – who most London group members will know is limited in his walking at the moment – was at the start to wave us off. After which he used the flexibility of his Freedom Pass to meet the group at Ruislip Lido to have lunch and at Wetherspoons in Rickmansworth to celebrate our arrival.

Photographs by Paul Lawrence; more by Ian Watson on the group Facebook site