**The Downs from Chichester, Saturday 14th March 2015**

19 walkers, 19 miles – leader Peter Aylmer

19 walkers from London LDWA, with a few also from Surrey and Sussex, joined Peter for this walk around the South Downs.

We kept up a good pace on the old rail line out of Chichester until cutting up through a large metal-detecting party onto the Downland section, taking the short pull up the scarp slope to the north end of Bow Hill ridge. From here there's a long descent through a broad dry valley to Stoughton, passing the pub there before a lower hill-section to the Barley Mow at Walderton. We'd phoned ahead with the news that roughly half of us were eating, and they kept a table – good food, great beer choice, prompt service, perfect!

In the afternoon we took a little loop round part of the Kingley Vale National Nature Reserve, past Tolkeinesque yews so old they can't be dated, across the open ground of the vale itself, and off-piste (deliberately!) through a dark coppice where even the shortest of the walkers had to duck. From there, the bridleway over Stoke Clump took us back – on what at first seemed like a bee-line to Chichester Cathedral – towards the rail line, and home.

Photographs by Peter Aylmer, Keith Lane, Bola Baruwa and Jane Rosoux