**Pilgrimage to Dreamland (Canterbury to Margate), Saturday 28th May 2016**

8 walkers, 21.6 miles – leader Dick Bowman

8 starters and 7 finishers for this never-to-be-repeated traverse of the varied countryside of Thanet.

The morning spent mostly in the woodlands along the Stour Valley Path, passing through the villages of Fordwich and Wickhambreaux (the latter a shining example of car ownership leading to environmental ruination), admiring three jolly piglets and the industrialised strawberry factory along with the steam and traction engine collection at Preston Court Farm before a lunch stop in Preston.

Afternoon with completely different landscape, first through orchard to recross the Stour Valley Path and continue making our way to Margate along the banks of the Stour.  Final refreshment stop in Minster before crossing the Thanet Prairies to finally drop down into Birchington and along the beachside to Dreamland (arriving exactly one minute after the rides stopped, and our leader having failed to negotiate an LDWA Late Opening).

Then the Low Speed Train (at the High Speed fare) back along the North Kent coast.

Observations:

These Kent villages seem to have been able to retain at least a few amenities by way of pub, shop and school.

Our leader can't tell the difference between a stoat and a scrawny squirrel.

If bluebells are your thing, then the Canterbury-Preston stretch is highly recommended in late April (and for misty woods, try it in October).

Margate closes at 5pm on Bank Holiday Saturday.

Photographs by Dick Bowman