**St Albans Peripherique, Saturday 1st July 2017**

14 walkers, 20 miles – leader Jerome Ripp

Start 09.00 Finish 16.36. No stiles!

Our circuit of St Albans headed west to the Cathedral to view Roman stones in the tower and the Victorian monstrosity in the front. A brief explanation of the architecture was provided by one of the 3 local experts who were fortuitously on the walk. Culturally invigorated we skirted the edge of the Roman Verulamium and then north to view the estate of Childwickbury, where film director Stanley Kubrick resided and still home to his widow. A big Art fair was on but we decided to skip this and now on the Herfordshire way reached Sandridge for a loo and tea/coffee stop. Through Symondshyde Great wood, passing ominous signs saying No to some proposed building developments and then into Hatfield Aerodrome which is now a vast nature reserve with many paths. A picnic lunch in the middle of this impressive renovation gave us the opportunity to reflect on the glorious past of this area, the home of De Havilland aircraft and the 2 famous acting sisters who were cousins of the flying ace. It seemed very fitting that today was the birthday of Olivia De Havilland still in the news at the age of 101. A brief stretch on the Alban Way disused railway with the imaginative and humorous signs of Nast Hyde station. Pub stop at the Crooked Billet Colney Heath and then the Watling Chase trail following the upper river Colne and the many artificial lakes. After London Colney, local knowledge led us along permissive paths around the old mental hospital area of Napsbury park, across the golf course and back to the station along another short section of Alban way. Weather conditions were ideal for the walk, there were no head bangers and unusually for this leader, no one was lost or abandoned. Pure luck really!