**“Boring, Boring” Trail, Saturday 22nd July 2017**

20 walkers, 20 miles – leader Julie Welch

Sixteen walkers including two newcomers set out from Plumstead station on our Arsenal-themed venture, which began with a brief trip over the road to view what’s left of the Manor Ground, where Arsenal F.C., founded in 1886 and in those first years known as Dial Square F.C., played many of their early games. We viewed what is now some kind of concreted-over factory site from our perch on the Southern Outfall Sewer (also now covered-over and turned into a walkway, you will be relieved to know). From there we backtracked to Plumstead station and headed for the Green Chain Walk, which took us over Plumstead Common, site of even earlier matches, to the now-defunct Prince of Wales pub where the first committee meeting was held to establish Arsenal as a club. From there we dropped down into Woolwich and Dial Square and headed through the dank and echoing foot tunnel for a long stretch using part of the Capital Ring. This took us on the Thames Path to Gallion’s Point and onward from there through the University of East London Campus with its spectacularly-designed student accommodation, and London City Airport over the water. Up till then it had been T-shirt and shorts weather but by the time we crossed the A12 and found ourselves on Greenway raindrops were falling on our heads and were to persist for the rest of the way. Nevertheless, we had a brief but excellent lunch stop – featuring quite possibly the finest home-made cakes in London – at the community-run View Tube café in the Olympic Park.

We continued on our way via the Lee Navigation to Stoke Newington where after taking a wrong turning in the drizzle at Abney Park Cemetery we nevertheless managed to find out way out, and restored ourselves with a welcome tea stop in Stoke Newington Church Street. Here we left the Capital Ring and made a little tour of Highbury Fields before a highlight of the walk – a tour through what was once Highbury, Arsenal’s famous ground. The old stands have been turned into flats and the famous pitch is a communal garden. Another 500 yards or so and we were back on course for the Emirates Stadium, where photos were taken beside bronzes of Herbert Chapman and Thierry Henry. Officially the walk ended here, but a large number of by now bedraggled walkers valiantly set off for the nearest Wetherspoon’s, the converted Coronet cinema in the Holloway Road.

Photographs by Julie Welch; more by Julie on the group Facebook page