**Saunderton Figure of Eight, Saturday 27th July 2019**

13 walkers, 19.4 miles – leader Lynne McKenzie

13 walkers arrived at a wet and cool Saunderton station on Saturday morning.  The overnight rain and some overgrown paths meant soggy trousers (or wet legs for those who had braved the weather in shorts) and socks for some but the drop in temperature from those experienced during the week was very welcome.

Through the morning we were amongst crops of barley, wheat, oats and maize.  There were a number of climbs in the morning as we made our way up onto the Ridgeway. After passing through the village of Bledlow we went up and over Chinnor Hill where we were rewarded with a banana break.  Moving on we had to tackle a number of slippy and wide stiles as we headed towards Radnage and up to Bledlow Ridge.  Skirting the edges of fields we headed back to Saunderton at the end of the top of the Eight.

Passing the station was too much of a lure for over half the group who after a drink in the pub caught the 13:50 back to London hopefully satisfied after a morning of beautiful views in the Chilterns.

Undeterred by the weather the remaining six carried on towards Bradenham Manor where the local cricket team was in action.  The leader reached for her map as the group made their way along the length of Naphill Common.  A Common which takes strength of character and being happy going a little of course as many paths converge from various angles.  Successfully leaving the Common we encountered another game of cricket at Downley.

The leader strode out across Downley Common (despite the reservations of a local man that she knew where she was going) towards West Wycombe and the Hellfire Caves.  The timing of trains allowed us the opportunity to have a cup of tea and cake at the Caves. Luckily we were well sheltered when the heavens opened.  We lingered until the rain subsided to begin our last climb of the day up to the Dashwood Mausoleum.  A lovely walk through the trees back to Saunderton in fine time for the 17.50 train.

A good time had by all I believe on a perfect day for a walk.

Photographs by Ian Fairweather; more by Ian on the group Facebook site