**Escape from Dagenham 2019, Friday 20th September 2019**

12 walkers, 15 miles – leader Ron Williamson

A gloriously sunny day which was enjoyed by 8 walkers from London group and 4 from Essex & Herts.

Our escape from Dagenham led us 9 miles eastwards virtually to the M25 which became today’s boundary. The urban expanse of our starting point seemed far away as we enjoyed the rapidly maturing woodlands of Thames Chase, which now covers many acres of former gravel pits and industrial wasteland. In addition to well-maintained public footpaths there has now been established many miles of walkways open to the public.

We were informed that next year will be the 30th anniversary of this project and to mark the occasion a 30-mile hike, visiting most of the trust’s woodlands, is being planned. A possible contender for inclusion in our next year’s walk programme!

Our return journey followed the Upminster Circular walk which conveniently led us back to our destination at the end of the District Line.

An escape which probably exceeded most people’s expectation and although never very far from suburbia included less than two miles of pavement bashing.

Photographs by Ian Watson