**A Circular Walk Round the East London Parks and Marshes, Saturday 17th April 2021**

21 walkers, 17.8 miles – leaders Lonica Vanclay and Melissa Butcher

We couldn’t have wished for better weather for the first London LDWA walk since COVID lockdown eased – it was warm and sunny; leaves and flowers were coming out – and the people were definitely out and about.

Even before knowing the weather, so many signed up – all keen to get back to social walking – that Melissa kindly agreed to lead a second group.

A distance of 28.7 km / 17.8 miles – and the 11 in Melissa’s group and 10 in Lonica’s made it all the way.

Who would have known that east London had so much green or so much water – canals and the River Lea we know but the Walthamstow and Copper Mills reservoirs and filter beds were a big surprise – or so many Graylag Geese (thanks Sam) – or some Hemlock water dropwort (Oenanthe crocata) which is perhaps the most poisonous indigenous plant in Britain (thanks Val)!

Some nostalgia as we crossed parts of the original Capital Challenge route – Hackney Henge, the View Tube etc.

But only a little sadness that we were missing the Capital Challenge which should have been today (the second route one to Crystal Palace – thanks Neil for the reminder) as we all enjoyed the walk, weather and company so much.

Best part though was when we met and properly socially distanced of course, waved and greeted the other group (who walked the opposite way round to us) – twice too as there were some loops on the walk!

Hopefully next time we can all walk together.

Report by Lonica Vanclay, photographs by Lonica, Melissa, Adam Dawson and Paul Lawrence