**Cowden to Eridge by Ashdown Forest, Saturday 2nd May 2009**

16 walkers, 24.5 miles – leader Nicole Carbonara

On a glorious spring day, 16 walkers were ready for this walk but 2 of them having not checked the website, indicating a change of departure station due to engineering work, ended up arriving one hour after we had started our walk. They walked straight to Hartfield and joined us for the lunch stop at 1pm. Less than an hour after the start I did the first head count and found out that we had lost 2 walkers. Although they didn't have a map, they managed to join us in Hartfield, after having caught a bus. Unfortunately that morning, one of us had fallen and hurt her ankle. She decided to stop at lunch time and to take a bus from Hartfield to the closest station. After all these emotions, I asked for a voluntary back marker and Russell kindly accepted to keep everybody together so the afternoon went without further loss. We passed the Pooh Bridge, climbed to the top of Ashdown Forest in the blooming gorse and walked on the ridge enjoying the wonderful clear views. Climbing down on the east slope the bluebells surrounded us everywhere and we enjoyed not only their blue mist but were especially overwhelmed by their subtle fragrance. We had a tea stop in the sun before the last push to the station. Three newcomers were trying LDWA. They said that they enjoyed the walk so we hope that they'll decide to join. The results from my GPS uploaded onto Anquet are: trip odometer 24.5miles; Height ascended 920m; movement time 6h52; stop time 1h33; movement average 3.4mph.