**Edenbridge and Chiddingstone Circular, Saturday 10th October 2009**

16 walkers, 22 miles – leader Mike Ratcliff

Our walk from Edenbridge saw us cover some very differing terrain from the flat, Low Weald countryside around Edenbridge up to the hills of the High Weald north of Cowden in the afternoon. Sixteen of us walkers made the start from Edenbridge Town Station at ten to nine under a distinctly overcast and rain heavy sky. Although not raining at the time, the showers that had dampened the area overnight were clearly evident in the soggy ground that awaited us. Thankfully this was not to continue for long as a wonderfully strong sun rapidly broke through at about a quarter distance of the route. Walking north-east from Edenbridge we soon skirted the northern banks of Bough Beech Reservoir to continue east heading towards Tonbridge. We soon made our way south however, passing through the delightful village of Chiddingstone and eventually reaching our lunch stop at The Rock Inn at Hoath Corner, a remote spot that proved pleasantly tranquil and by this time very warm under a strong mid-day sun. Continuing south over the High Weald we were greeted with some beautiful views of the Ashdown Forest area stretching out in front of us and eventually descending down to lower ground where we joined the Sussex Border Path. We now made our way west with the long-distance path, passing into East Sussex for just a few hundred yards and then starting our climb up to Cowden and back into Kent. Our final ascent of the day saw us climb our way north from Cowden up to our highest point on the walk up at the ancient site of Dry Hill Fort where we joined the Vanguard Way. The views that awaited us looking east towards Tunbridge Wells and north to the greensand ridge and North Downs were just terrific. A gradual descent down some extremely rutted tracks took us back down to Edenbridge, where we made our way back into town following the meandering River Eden where many old, decaying and ghostly pillboxes still stood sentry guarding the town. The sun at the final stage was casting long shadows of us all as it glowed low but warm in the sky behind us.