**London Parks, Saturday 8th January 2011**

23 walkers, 18 miles – leader Rob Myers

Heavy overnight and early morning rain deterred some walkers, however, there was a good turnout of 23 that gathered at the start in Trafalgar Square. The weather was dry throughout the day with occasional sunny intervals which was really pleasant. The walk proceeded through St James Park, Green Park and into Hyde Park where Serpentine Running Club were holding their monthly handicap race consisting of two laps of the Serpentine. This kept us entertained and I think we avoided obstructing the runners. We took the opportunity to explore Kensington Gardens including some of Anish Kapoor's stainless steel structures in his "World turned upside down" exhibition. Shortly afterwards we explored Holland Park and enjoyed seeing the Kyoto Garden and several peacocks. A necessary stretch of road walking took us to the Thames at Hammersmith for lunch at the "Rutland Arms". We were served very quickly and the beer was good. The afternoon walk began with a walk along the Thames Path to Colney Reach and on to Chiswick House and Gardens. This was the former home of Lord Burlington who was obsessed with of all things roman, so there were plenty of roman statues and even a small temple. There was also a couple of obelisks fashionable during Victorian time. A further stretch of the Thames Path followed past Kew Bridge to Brentford. Here I inadvertently did a stretch of the Thames Path which I hadn't recce'd. Fortunately I got away with it. From Brentford Lock a short walk along the Grand Union Canal took us to Boston Manor Park where we passed the Jacobean mansion currently closed to the public due to safety issues. Another road section took us to Gunnersbury Park which was our final destination. The former home of the Rothschild family which has been a public park since 1926, Gunnersbury Park contained many fine old trees as well as a lot of dilapidated buildings some of which are used as museums. A fine walk enjoyed by all.