

Institute *of* Physics

LONDON AND SOUTH EASTERN BRANCH REMS SECTION London Loop Walk 1 Erith to Old Bexley 19 April 2008

This walk has been organised by David Pick

The London Loop, pioneered by the London Walking Forum, is London's first official orbital footpath, a fascinating journey around the edge of greater London, down hidden alleyways, through residential areas, along rivers and canals, across public parks, nature reserves, woods, occasional enclaves of farmland and surprisingly few roads, with many unexpected gems along the way. It is easily reachable by public transport and lies near the outer edge of zone 6. Some parts of the route on the north of the Thames still remain to be way marked but it is walkable throughout using the guide, "The London Loop" written by David Sharp, list price £12.99. This guide contains maps, directions, detailed descriptions of the local scenery and facilities on the route. I bought my copy from Amazon.co.uk at £8.44.

The whole route is about 150 miles long and Sharp's book divides it into 150 sections, starting and stopping at convenient transit points. Each section has "escape points" to a nearby bus stop or train station allowing the walk to be further sub-divided.

It is proposed to tackle the Erith to Old Bexley section on the 19 April. Easy walking, mainly on pleasant paths beside three rivers (Thames, Darent and Cray) and through parks and woodland, although there are some rather unattractive urban parts. This section is about 14 km long with escapes at Slade Green (6km) and Crayford (9 km). The walk starts at Erith station and goes round the South Bank of the Thames Estuary to the River Darent. We then follow the Darent (inland) to the River Cray through Crayford to Bexley. About half way, there are two pubs, the Jolly Farmers and the Bear and Ragged Staff, which are potential lunch stops. On the walk we pass the David Evans Silk Centre & Museum, which outlines the history of silk and provides demonstrations of hand-silk printing; the Hall Place gardens, with toilets, a café and the Jacobean Barn pub for further refreshment and St Mary's Church, Bexley, which has 12th century features and an odd octagonal cap on the spire. The route is described as entirely level with a mixture of pavements, tarmac paths and rough surfaces and a few stiles. It is expected that the pace will be gentle and allow time to stop and stare and visit some of the attractions.

I suggest we aim to catch the 10.04 from London Bridge Underground Station and arrive at Erith at 10.36. Latecomers can contact me on my mobile number 0037253135263 to find out where we are.

You can download details of the route and a picturesque map from

<http://www.walklondon.org.uk/section.asp?section=1> and

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/tfl/gettingaround/walkfinder/walkdetails.asp?id=74>