

Institute of Physics

LONDON AND SOUTH EASTERN BRANCH REMS SECTION Visit to the Jubilee River and Savill Gardens Thursday 24 June 04

This repeat visit has been organised by David Tawney.

The **Jubilee River** is a flood channel excavated for the Environmental Agency to relieve flooding at Maidenhead, Windsor and Eton caused by the Thames. It is 12 kilometres long, leaving the Thames at Maidenhead and rejoining it after Eton. It was opened in 2002.

(http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/regions/thames/323147/208805/?lang=_e®ion=)

The construction involved crossing under the M4, the A4 and other roads as well as railways at two points and the methods used to achieve this with minimum disruption of traffic are a story in themselves. Conservation and sustainability were high priorities in the design of this unique river which has led to the creation of habitats for birds, fish, voles and wild flowers: 250 000 native trees and shrubs have been planted and 250 000 aquatic plants. There are picnic areas and paths for pedestrians and cycles. As Tony Proud, Head of the Flood Defence Operations Team has put it, every effort has been made to restore to nature what commercialisation of the Thames has removed.

In January 2003, the River achieved its aim and successfully protected Maidenhead, Windsor and Eton from flooding although the Thames had very high water levels. These led to flooding at villages below the relief scheme for which it has been blamed.

Our tour of the river in a small coach will have stops at three points, roughly where the Jubilee River leaves the Thames, where it rejoins it and at an ecological study area. Our guide will be Tony Proud. Footwear should be suitable for riverside paths.

Participants will be able to have a self-service lunch or a snack at the restaurant at Savill Gardens, before a conducted tour of the Gardens.

Savill Gardens, which belongs to the Crown Estate, occupies 30 acres and was founded in 1932; it is internationally known. A very attractive woodlands garden with lawns, shrubs and trees, with water flowing through it, it is at its best in the spring but in June herbaceous borders will be starting to flourish, as will the new Jubilee Garden. At any time of the year, the paths through the trees and shrubs are very inviting. (<http://www.savillgarden.co.uk/default.htm>)

The total cost per person is £17.50 and the number is limited to 19.

Programme

10.30 – 11.00 Assemble at Windsor Riverside Station,

50 minutes from Waterloo. (South West Trains: the 09.28 arrives at 10.19, the 9.58 at 10.47.)

It is 600 yards down the hill from the Central Station (6 minutes from Slough, Thames Trains: the 10.13 arrives at 10.39 [check the latest timetable.]

It is only 400 yards up the hill from the King Edward Avenue Car Park, at which there are usually spaces at this time. (Ring 07754 191 768 on the day if you have problems.)

Coffee is available at a kiosk in the station.

11.00 **Board the coach** and meet Tony Proud. There will be stops at:

1. Black Potts in Eton where the Jubilee River rejoins the Thames.
2. Dorney Wetlands, an ecology study area.
3. The controls at Taplow, just after where the Jubilee River leaves the Thames.

1.15 **Arrive at Savill Gardens**, Englefield Green: self-service lunch in restaurant.

2.15 **Meet a guide** for a tour of the Gardens.

3.30 **Board the coach** to return to Windsor Riverside Station.