On 21 June 2023 Mole Valley Ramblers held its eighth Midsummer trip, to Mottisfont in Hampshire, a National Trust property with a magnificent display of old roses, and beautiful countryside around in the valley of the River Test. After a two-year gap because of Covid-19 restrictions, and last year travelling by car (to Hinton Ampner), this year we returned to hiring a coach.





We offered a choice of four walks, all from Mottisfont, of 4, 5, 6 or 9 miles in length, which also allowed time for everyone to enjoy the gardens and partake of refreshments. Louise and Andy led the walks, with Fiona stepping in to assist in the morning to allow for groups to go at differing paces. We hope this allowed for everyone's preferences. We had 43 on the trip altogether, with the walking groups kept to 12 or 13 each. We were fortunate in having magnificent weather, dry and sunny, as it has been on every midsummer trip since our first one in 2014. How lucky is that!





Here are a few photos to give a flavour of the day. More can be found on our MVR website. Thank you to Barbara M and Jan C for contributing photographs, plus a couple of mine.









Thanks are deserved to Janet P for handling bookings, and Louise and Andy for leading the walks. We have had some lovely feedback, which is always rewarding to receive. For example:

> *Just to say how much we enjoyed the above trip. Perfect in every way. It's our first midsummer one with Mole Valley. So please another one next year if possible!*
> *Firstly, thank you Fiona for organising an excellent trip to Mottisfont. It was our first visit - such a beautiful area for walking and the chalk streams were very special.*
> *Thank you very much for all the hard work that went into arranging such a lovely day out for so many people.*

So, do we have another Midsummer trip in 2024? I think so, we might even re-visit the Kent coast around Dover. But we are also open to ideas from our members – just speak to anyone on the Committee.

Here is where we have been each year so far:

2014	Deal to Dover, with tea at South Foreland lighthouse
2015	Uppark and Standen from Queen Elizabeth Country Park
2016	Henley on Thames to Stonor in the Chilterns
2017	Firle Beacon, South Downs, near Lewes
2018	Hythe and Dungeness
2019	Singleton to Chichester
2022	Hinton Ampner, near New Alresford

For those who might wonder about costs, hiring a coach and driver is not cheap (£840 this year) plus a tip. We cost it on the basis of breaking even if 40 seats are sold. Any more goes towards future social events.

Fiona Spencer
24.06.23



