

Richmond Stroll and Chat: Strawberry Hill House

– Alisha Dave

Throughout my volunteering with Let's Go Outside and Learn, one of my favourite aspects is that I am able to explore more of new areas that I hadn't been before. Hence when this week's stroll session was in Strawberry Hill House, I was curious as this location and what types of greenery would I see. When I first arrived, I could tell that this location was a popular one since there was a mini bus with lots of people arriving in the car park for a morning visit. The weather that day was a windy so I was very happy that I brought by warmer coat.

As we were strolling through the grounds, I recognised that we were next to St Mary's University, which felt rather nostalgic since I am a recent graduate. We were told that Horace Walpole, the son of Sir Robert Walpole, the first official Prime Minister in English History called Strawberry Hill House his "little Gothic Castle". This fact was a new token of learning to me and I was very interested to see more of this "Gothic Castle". The building was dazzling beautifully when the sun shone on through the clouds and the grounds had different types of vegetables growing from courgettes to berries.

I came across this leaf and I thought "there is really is so much beauty in nature", and so I took a photo, you can see below that the droplets of rain that have fallen on the leaf almost look like crystals. This project helped me have a larger appreciation for my local parks and the beauty that is just outside our homes. Being with a group and having a stroll through Strawberry Hill House allows me and others to make new friends. Also, you can see in one of the photos the Gold Griffin on the stairs which I thought was pretty cool! I also learn so much from this project about various parts of nature. For example, Frances, the leader of this project told us about the susurrations of the trees, the sounds the leaves make on each tree and how it is a different sound for each tree! Fascinating! A fun and engaging day learning about Strawberry Hill House.

