

July 24

In July 24, Science and Technology Group spent a wonderful day on The Elizabeth Line.

Many will say that this overground/underground line through London and beyond is “the Envy of The World” and quite rightly so. The project was started in 2008 and was opened in May 2022 when our much-loved Queen Elizabeth II opened and travelled on it. The line is still being worked on and improved, an example being that signs above the boarding gates on the platforms will let passengers know where there is available space on the train. The trains are comprised of one long passage so can be walked from end to end and each train can hold 1,500 passengers. The whole route system takes approximately 750,000 passengers each day.

We loved the platforms which are very modern, very sleek, and white with curved walls and ceilings. They were spotlessly clean and tidy. This would be, in part, because there were no drinks and snack machines. I suppose when travelling at 60 mph such machines are not needed! I would add that on the occasions that a driver must take over the speed drops to 20 mph.

We travelled from Taplow to Farringdon then on to Canary Wharf, returning to Taplow via Paddington. At Farringdon we loved the Space Age look of the platforms and the Totem Signs to direct us between platforms. We had a ride on their Funicular Lift which took us diagonally up and down next to the escalator. At Canary Wharf we went up several levels to the Eden Project style garden. This is a stunning garden in the centre of the financial centre, so calm and peaceful as well as beautiful. Back down to the platforms, we next stopped at Paddington. Here we took another train into a siding where we were each able to sit in the driver’s seat in the cab, what an experience. The driver has a comfy arm chair and has many screens and controls enabling the train to be moved so smoothly. In fact, at Paddington the train reverses itself as the driver walks from the cab, at one end, to the cab at the other end. We then went on a toilet hunt, there are not many around for such a huge station but when we found them, they were, of course, clean and modern.

We arrived back at Taplow having marvelled at the electronics of the trains and the platforms and having had a great, albeit tiring day.

Victoria P