

BETTER EARLY/LATE THAN NEVER

The newsletter of the
Ramblers' Association
Essex Area —
email version.

Your friends and
colleagues can get
this version simply by
emailing:

talkingwalking@aol.com

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It may seem strange that our January edition should bear the **Seasons Greeting** for all our members, but that is how it goes with our publishing routine.

Anyway, on behalf of all the Area Officers, especially the Chair, David Cullington, I wish everyone an enjoyable and festive season and also take advantage of the situation to wish everyone a stimulating **New Year** with lots of exciting walks opportunities.

Given that we are covering the New Year, it is perhaps reasonable to consider **Resolutions**. 2005 has seen a significant increase in the Area profile. We are beginning to see that the County organisation can actually *make a difference* to the way that Groups operate.

We have managed to improve services to Groups, we have improved communication, increased representation at Area council and held a highly successful Finance Conference.

We aim to do much more in 2006 and this is where Resolutions come in. For the Area to become even more effective, we need to hear peoples' views.

To start with, we would like a **record attendance at the AGM on 4th February**.

Following on from this we want each Group to ensure that it is **represented at every Area Council meeting** (only 4 meetings a year). By giving representation in this way you will not only ensure that the Area organisation more closely reflects the needs of its members, you will also be

giving support to the Officers who give an enormous amount of time on our behalf. The second Resolution I would like everyone to support is to make 2006 **The Year of Footpaths**. You will read elsewhere of the RA's initiative involving kilometre square surveying. It is fortuitous that this coincides with our own **21A Campaign** to which we hope that everyone will make a contribution.

It is vital that all walkers play their part to ensure that the paths in Essex are of a standard which reflects the importance of walking as a past-time in this Area. Remember that Essex Area has more members than the whole of Scottish Ramblers and is second only to Surrey in Area numbers in Britain.

21A – THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENT IN 2006

The **Area Walks Working Party** has started working out the detail of our **major walking event** for 2006.

Although it seems a long way off, we know that programmes for the next period are already being prepared and we want to be certain that **every Group** will include at least two items in their walks programme for June/July.

As we have mentioned before we are using the National **Use Your Paths Week** as the framework for our own 21st Anniversary Celebrations (21A). As a minimum, we want each group to organise **at least one walk** during the event period **24th June to 2nd July** which will draw attention to the state of the path network in its area. We recognise that some Groups will find little amiss and that this will provide the basis for a congratulatory message to Essex County Council.

However we also know that much of the network is substandard and statistically is near the bottom of the national performance tables. The reason for the poor standards is a lack of funding and it is hoped that we can draw the attention of our political representatives to the problem, by handing in a petition at Chelmsford County Hall on **Saturday 1st July at 3pm** with as many members as possible providing a supportive presence. We want hundreds of people at this event and to make the day an enjoyable one, we will be encouraging Rambles Secretaries to organise walks in the Area beforehand.

Please reserve Saturday 1st July in your diary and look out for other events which your Group organises during the days running up to it.

THE CENTENARY WALK COMES OF AGE.

Harry Bitten, ex Countryside Officer for West Essex, erstwhile collaborator with Fred Matthews and a driving force behind the **Friends of Epping Forest** has led his last Centenary Walk for the Friends. For the last twenty one years Harry has led the 14 mile walk from Wanstead Flats to the Bell Common, Epping. The walk was inaugurated to celebrate the centenary of the Epping Forest Act in 1878.

Newham Council contacted Fred and Harry who together produced a route description that was eventually published by the Forest Conservators and is now featured on Ordnance Survey maps of the area. Harry introduced the walk in 1984 and has led it ever since.

Mike Whiteley, the new group secretary for West Essex, will be leading next years walk which is scheduled for 24th September 2006.

NOW EVERYONE CAN DO THEIR BIT

The national RA have come up with a brilliant plan to encourage everyone to do a little volunteering and make an enormous contribution to our charitable aims. They aim to survey the condition of **all paths**.

They are asking each member to survey a kilometre square of the OS map by walking all the paths in their chosen square and reporting all the faults to the Highway Authority and the local Footpath Secretary. This activity will take place from 20th March 2006 and 22nd September 2007. More details will appear in a future **EAU** but you can get a leaflet on the subject (circular 05/122) by emailing adrianm@london.ramblers.org.uk

RECORDS TUMBLE

Lea Valley's record of a 20% attendance has been smashed by another Friend's Group, **Essex E13** who recorded 24%. If the Area AGM gets this kind of support we should see about 1500 members at the Witham Community Centre (and a small drift of pigs flying across the skyline).

and TALKING OF RECORDS

...**West Essex** actually held a contested election for Secretary. Mike Whiteley succeeds Dr Peter Spence who resigned his position after many years in the office.

NAVIGATE THE WAY THROUGH ESSEX

Keen walkers need look no further when contemplating their next countryside walk this autumn. Essex County Council has produced a new collection of walks through some of the county's most beautiful countryside.

In the heart of Essex, the rivers Chelmer and Blackwater blend into a navigation, flowing through the countryside to the sea at Heybridge Basin. The navigation is now a wonderful place to enjoy the scenery and take a stroll, as it is no longer used to transport goods.

A colourful booklet has been produced by Essex County Council featuring six walks on and around the towpath, between Chelmsford and Heybridge Basin. The walks range from a gentle stroll on the sea wall to the whole length of the towpath totalling 15 miles.

The booklet also brings the area to life with historic stories and beautiful pictures to accompany the maps. The area has many churches, mills, mansions and abundant wildlife, which can be enjoyed on the walks.

Councillor Rodney Bass (Con. Heybridge and Tollesbury), Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation, said: "This is the latest edition to several walking and cycling guides that Essex County Council has produced and I'm delighted we're able to add to the collection offering further choice for people to enjoy the Essex countryside."

The booklets are available from Essex County Council on 01245 437291, or by post to:

Essex County Council - Public Rights of Way, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH

The guide costs £3.50. Please make cheques payable to Essex County Council.

Or alternatively via the Essex County Council website: www.essexcc.gov.uk 'Essex eShop'.

AREA WEBSITE

If you haven't visited our new website yet, go there now!

You don't even have to bother with the web address just put 'Essex Area Ramblers' into your search engine and you will be there.

Several Groups already have links to the site. If yours hasn't yet, contact the website via its email address at ear@essexarearamblers.co.uk and join the family.

A LITTLE DIVERSION

Explorer 183 between GR 884101 and GR 883111, the long awaited diversion takes effect on December 5th 2005.

This takes the path from Little Totham Hall out of the obstructing reservoir; along the good headland instead of crossfield and finally outside of Moor's Farm.

This is, of course, the route walked by the majority for many years. *KA*

KEVIN ASCOTT CONTINUES TO ADVISE ON RAMBLER FRIENDLY PUBS

Add: The Rose & Crown at Great Waltham – Eat food in garden
The Walnut Tree at Broad's Green (Great Waltham) - Not selling food presently so eat anywhere!

Delete: The Bell at Woodham Walter - Presently closed
The Three Elms at Chignal Smeely - Presently closed

The White Hart at Mundon, the Viper at Fryerning and Cross Keys at White Notley no longer allow you to consume your own food on the premises.

A note from the editor: We have accumulated a lot of information on pubs and I would be extraordinarily grateful to anyone who was prepared to collate it, so that we could distribute it to Rambles Secretaries.

JOHN DOWDING GIVES US SOMETHING ELSE TO READ

South East Rambler is now re-launched as **South East Walker** with a new publisher, Think Publications, who produce our national RA "Walk" magazine.

Essex Area Council decided against the cost of having it as a replacement for "Essex Rambler" as our Area news, on grounds of high cost, but it is available on individual subscription.

The Autumn issue contains a number of Essex items, apart from my own modest piece on the effect of open access in Essex. There is the formal opening of the London Loop, the inner London circular walk. This urban path goes from Hackney Wick, through Stratford to Canning Town & North Woolwich and through the foot tunnel to Kent. It complements the outer London Loop which is on a route "near the M25" alignment through Chigwell, Harold Wood to the Rainham Marshes and Coldharbour point. They both have guidebooks, by Colin Saunders and David Sharp respectively and published by Aurum Press.

There is a topical four page article on the Nelson Way from Burnham Thorpe in Norfolk to Portsmouth, passing through Harwich, West Bergholt, Epping and Greenwich. Extensions to Epping Forest are also described in an article, listing various areas that are now available.

Finally there is an article by David Sharp, co-editor on the new (2004) country park at Waltham Abbey, the Gunpowder Park, which has the London Loop passing through it.

South East Walker is available from Think Publications Ltd, at 124-128 Barby Road, London, W10 6BL. It costs £10.50 a year for the four issues, which come out between "Walk" magazine issues.

FOOTPATH ORDERS

ORDERS 2004

(ECC) FP 10 Ulting Public Path Order 2003

Order made 23 October 2003 under s119 HA 80

Confirmed on 17th May 2004 Effective 14th June 2004

Explorer 183 GR80900855 Path diverted to east and out of the quarry lake.

ORDERS 2005

(MDC) FP 12 Heybridge Extinguishment Order 2004

Order made 25th November 2004 under s118 HA 80

Confirmed 4th February 2005 Effective 30 March 2005

Explorer 183 GR 85000810 Put simply, this FP is now BR60

MDC FP 26(Part) Heybridge Public Path Diversion Order 2005

Order made 9th March 2005 under s119 HA 80

Confirmed 25th May 2005 Came into force 7th July 2005

Explorer 183 GR 85800820 Minor footway adjustment in Stock Chase Heybridge

(ECC) FP 20 Tolleshunt D'Arcy & FP 11 (Part) Tolleshunt Knights Public Path Extinguishment Order 2005

Order made 14th March 2005 under s118 HA 80

Confirmed 17th August 2005 Came into force 25th August 2005

Explorer 184 GR 91201420 Stopped up in garden ground and replaced by next Order

ECC HA80 s25 Agreement link from Oxley Road to FP 11 Tolleshunt D'Arcy

Agreement dated 27 January 2003 Came into force 17th August 2005

Explorer 184 GR 91201410 Puts path on track where everyone has walked for years.

(ECC) s53 Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 DM and Statement Modification No 288 Bridleway 29 Cold Norton and Bridleway 24 Stow Maries Maldon District 2004

Order made 26 May 2004 Confirmed after Public inquiry on 31 August 2005

Explorer 176 GR 84109990 to Explorer 175 GR 82409890

Route on old railway track, claimed by public as used for more than 20 years, upheld.



and keep 'happy feet' in 2006

VISIT THE POWERHOUSE

You can visit the RA Central Office on the Embankment for an **open day** on 7th June 2006. They will show you round and feed you from 11am to 5pm and the Area will pay for your travel expenses. The Area can only sponsor one place so please let us have the name (to talkingwalking@aol.com) of a person who you think would really benefit from finding out more about our organisation and, even more importantly, would be prepared to pass on the information to others. Another way of getting a day at Central Office is to be a **new or potential treasurer**. On Saturday 8th April anyone falling into one of these two categories will be entitled to attend an **Induction Day** where all the secrets of the job will be revealed (please approach your own secretary or Len Banister for details).

JOHN BARNARD - OUR AREA COUNTRYSIDE SECRETARY WILL BE RETIRING FROM THE POST AT THE AGM.

Dig down to the very soles of Rambling to find it is a simple exercise. Just saunter in the countryside when free and easy; left right, left right. No need to be a member, get details of organised rambles off the web-site, then you can add the important social dimension to the lovely exercise. No need to take a turn leading; no pubs, car-parking nor path-condition reports to organise. Others can do all that.

This arrangement would not satisfy John Barnard: he would regard it more careless than carefree. And John Barnard took care.

Rambling is not a simple exercise: *if you go about sustaining a Parish Footpath Preservation Society; if you go around seeking clues with which to formulate quizzes-on-the-hoof; if you become an Area Footpath Secretary allocated to your local Group and organise parish path surveys, and follow-up the results; if you strive hard to keep your local Ramblers' Association Group on RA footpath matters instead of being off-railed by popular social activity; if you study all the complicated laws pertaining to Highways and stay updated to their Local Governmental procedures, and then become an acknowledged expert in the matter, recognised as such by ramblers, local government officers and land-owning leaders alike.*

Rambling surely ain't simple! John Barnard did them all, and more. Obviously anyone having a rucksack loaded with such interesting hobbies would look forward to expressing himself more fully when retired. John alas, received an injury to his back which put him in hospital for too long, shortly after his full-time career at British Telecommunications ceased, and ultimately enforced his retirement from rambling also.

But he never gave up working for others. Indeed, with Barbara's support, he spread his wings and became involved with the Open Space Society campaigns, coupling these tasks with a large role as Essex Countryside Officer within the Ramblers' Association.

Has such a paragon really existed amid our ranks these last thirty years? Yes. But you may not have noticed him, mainly because he has not been able to ramble much these last two decades, and also due to his tendency to hide under a bushel of occlusions when addressing Meetings. But the results of his endeavours in our local countryside remain for us all to enjoy and guard for our successors' recreation. *Derek Keeble. Dec 05*

...and Sue Cooper, a long time member of Colchester Group, adds a comment about JB

I've known John Barnard since about 1974, when I met him across the badminton net, and then later of course, in the Colchester Group of Ramblers. At that time he walked regularly enjoying the open air and countryside, as a release from the office at BT. He very soon took a great interest in all aspects of the law with regards to any "rights of way" issues and worked diligently in helping to keep all the footpaths in his parish of Great Tey open and in good condition.

When he took early retirement from BT, his footpath "hobby" became almost as full time as his paid employment, and you could say it took over his life. He became footpath secretary for the Colchester Group and became an expert on all footpath matters.

Later he involved himself with RA area work, and was a mine of information for anyone with a footpath query, and never gave up badgering any authority concerned with a footpath problem.

During this time he came on three "long distance path" holidays that I organized, the Viking Way, and the Cotswold Way, done in two halves. John enjoyed all, and wrote little verses on events and those that took part.

I always got on very well with John and enjoyed his lovely dry sense of humour, and his dedication to all the principals of the RA.

NEWS FROM THE SECRETARY

Saturday Strolls - January to June 2006

Inner London Ramblers have produced a list of walks which are all accessible within the Travel Card Zone. Len Banister at talkingwalking@aol.com will forward details if requested.

ESSEX AREA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Hopefully, by now, everyone will know details of the **AGM**. **But just in case...**

It will be held on **Saturday 4th February 2006, 9.30 am**
at **Spring Lodge Community Centre**, Powers Hall End, **Witham** (grid ref: 815 154).

There will be refreshment served during the meeting, which will end at 12.00.
Members of the Area Council will have a 15 minute meeting immediately after.
Longish and short walks will be held in the afternoon, starting at 1.30 pm.

COUNTDOWN FOR THE AGM

30 December

Receipt of Group reports – ideally 200 words
Receipt of Officer Reports, maximum 200 words

6 January

Receipt of motions (general and for conference)

9 January

Receipt of statement of accounts and budget (this is the date of the AC)

15 January

Compilation of AGM papers, inclusion of items as necessary in the February Essex Area Update

16 January

AGM papers in for printing

19 January

AGM papers packed and posted: one copy each to all Officers and Area Council Members; five copies to each
Group Secretary: five copies to RA

There will be copies of the papers at the meeting for all who attend and much of the material will go out with the January email but if you would like an additional set posted to you, please email talkingwalking@aol.com

AGENDA FOR THE ESSEX AREA RAMBLERS' ASSOCIATION AGM 2006

1. Welcome from David Cullington
2. Apologies for Absence.
3. Minutes of the meeting of 12th February 2005.
4. Matters arising.
5. Address by Andrew Chadwick, the RA's Volunteer Development Manager
6. Chair's remarks.
7. Secretary's Report
8. The Treasurer's Report
To receive the accounts for the year 2004 – 2005 and budget for 2005 -2006
9. Officer Reports – (reception of written reports)
10. Motions received
To receive the revised constitution
11. Election of Officers
 - a) constitutional: President; Vice President(s); Chair; Vice Chair; Treasurer; Secretary; Footpath Secretary; Countryside Secretary
 - b) others: Group Formation; Membership; Recruitment; Area walks; Integrated Transport; Access; Publicity; Information Technology; Communications.
- 12 Representatives of
 - a) Affiliated organizations - maximum of five
 - b) Individual members - maximum of five
13. Election of Honorary Auditor.
14. Delegates to General Council
15. Any other business – notified to and accepted by the Chair prior to the meeting.

**ESSEX AREA
RAMBLERS****CONTACTS:**

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Phone: 020 8527 8158
Email: talkingwalking@aol.com

MORE NEWS FROM THE SECRETARY**Booking Holidays**

Whilst we encourage you to sample **Ramblers Holidays** and **Countryside Holidays** first, we occasionally get information from other organisations which offer members a good deal.

Two such are:

Alpine Arena which provides walking holidays in Zugspitze Arena in Austria – contact www.alpinearena.com

Anglo-German Walks run programmes in Kerry (Eire), the Scottish Southern Uplands, Yorkshire, South Pennines, North Eifel (Germany), the Austrian Salzkammergut and the Italian South Tyrol. (Attendees at the Area Council Meeting on 9 January will receive a brochure). Contact Anglo-german-walks@bh-cc.co.uk

Are you sure you're insured?

All Group Secretaries have recently been sent a fully revised circular on the Ramblers' Association Insurance. This well-written comprehensive document details the cover provided in respect of nuisance, trespass, libel, slander, injury and damage. It provides suggested wording for disclaimers on programmes and provides a template for recording incidents. Group Committees might well consider including it as an item on their next agenda.

Diary Dates

2005	26 Dec - 2 Jan:	Festival of Winter Walks
<u>2006</u>	9 Jan:	Area Council 7.30pm
	31 Jan:	Executive Committee 7.30pm
	4 Feb:	Essex Area AGM 9.30am followed by AC 12.00 in Witham Community Centre. Walks after starting at 1.00pm
	18 Mar:	Area Quiz at Wickham Bishops Village Hall, 7.00 for 7.30pm
	4 April:	Executive Committee 7.30pm
	12 April:	Footpaths Committee 7.30pm
	21-23 April:	General Council – Keele University
	8 May:	Area Council 7.30pm
	24 June - 2 July:	Use Your Paths Week and Area Campaign
	18 July:	Executive Committee 7.30pm
	16 Aug:	Footpaths Committee 7.30pm
	18 Sept:	Area Council 7.30pm
	15 Nov:	Footpaths Committee 7.30pm
	28 Nov:	Executive Committee 7.30pm
<u>2007</u>	15 Jan:	Area Council 7.30pm

Please note: All meetings are held at the Friends' Meeting House, Chelmsford unless stated otherwise.

Registered Charity Number
1093577

Company reg. Number
4458492

PS – Don't forget the Essex Area Quiz 2006

On **Saturday 18 March 2006** at 7.00 for 7.30pm in the new **Wickham Bishops Village Hall**
Contact Sue and Bruce Heath on 01621 843002 to book.