

Andy Sheff, the Area's hardworking treasurer.... wants to share some of the new complications of his job

"Use it or lose it" was a theme in an article on Area Walks in a recent edition of the EAU, this phrase is equally applicable to Finance, in a charitable organisation.

I attended an RA national conference at Leicester University in July to discuss the management of the Association's finances.

There were three main topics on the agenda:

1. Reserves Policy
2. Area Budgeting
3. Unified Banking

With reference to the first item, Central Office stated that reserves in some Areas (ours included) were too high and that they would like to spread the load nationally to help the poorer Areas and to finance those presenting worthwhile projects. They stated that the working capital (reserves) should be set at around 25% of the annual cost of carrying out RA work (i.e. expenses incurred on charitable activities). If this is not managed properly by Areas then they will enforce this by adjusting the Area Entitlement,

paid quarterly, and this is where item 2 comes in, (budgeting).

This year's Income & Expenditure accounting form will include an additional column to allow Area Treasurers to show a forecast of the following year's expenses. This will not be compulsory at first, as the scheme will take a few years before becoming fully implemented.

From the estimates shown, Central Office will calculate what the Area Entitlement will be by taking into account the reserves standing at the end of this financial year (30th September).

This procedure will commence from the 2nd quarter's payment. Final details have still to be decided and a draft policy and recommendation will go to the Board of Trustees very

shortly. Central Office is hoping to implement this before the General Council meeting in April 2006.

With regard to item 3; Unified Banking, all Areas must open a Unity Bank account (we have) as Area Entitlement will be transferred electronically in the near future. Areas not doing so will not receive their Entitlement. Central Office hope that all Groups will follow eventually and they are leaving it to the Areas to progress this. Sometime in the future the Group Allocation may also be transferred electronically.

In the open session, the question of a simplified Treasurer's Guidance Notes was mentioned, but although we were told this was in the pipe-line don't hold your breath! I think this is some way off.

Put it on 'ICE'

East Anglian Ambulance Service have launched a national 'In case of Emergency (ICE)' campaign, with the support of Falklands war hero Simon Weston.

The idea is that you store the word 'ICE' in your mobile phone address book, and against it, enter the number of the person you would want to be contacted "In Case of Emergency". In an emergency situation, ambulance and hospital staff will then be able to quickly find out who your next of kin is and be able to contact them.

It's so simple that everyone can do it. *Please do.*

Nick Barrett is leaving the Ramblers.

He has been headhunted by the Outward Bound Trust and will be their CEO from January 2006. I'm sure all will agree that he has been an outstanding leader for the Association and will be greatly missed.

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

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

talkingwalking@aol.com

Inside this issue:

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Dates for your Diary

A letter from Mr Mark Godding

8th July 1977

LONG

Sir, regarding the current enthusiasm for walking to extend one's life, may I point out that if one walked 10 miles a day, then having lived to the ripe old age of eighty, one would have walked for approximately nine years? It would also have cost a considerable amount of shoe leather. Is it worth it?

DISTANCE

The book's editor noted that this letter "received the supreme accolade of being discussed in "a Letter from America".

WALKING

"I put this letter, said Alistair Cooke, in a file of human wisdom that contains such gems as Aristotle's 'A play has a beginning, a middle and an end', Dr Johnson's 'Much may be made of a Scotsman if he is caught young', Mark Twain's 'The human being is the only animal that blushes, or needs to', and H. L. Mencken's definition of self-respect 'The secure feeling that no one, as yet, is suspicious'."

Use Your Paths - the 3 *mores*

Which are, of course, *more people* using *more paths* *more often*.

Well London's Metropolitan Walking Group certainly ended up with more people walking more paths more often for their Use Your Paths Week walk in South Woodham Ferrers. During the walk reconnoitre, Claire the walk leader, encountered 3 paths that were impassable due to crops and a further 2 almost impossible to use, due to severe overgrown vegetation. This necessitated a dramatic change of plan that resulted in the overall length of the walk inflating by about 33% as well as increasing the amount of road walking.

Claire made sure that she informed Essex County Council of the problems (*using RA path problem report forms*) accompanied by a covering letter that concludes: "This is not the first time I have experienced such difficulties when walking in Essex and unless I see improvements in footpaths, I will in future lead walks in other counties instead, thus depriving the local economy of the custom of our large group of walkers." Incidentally, according to the most recent Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI178), only 47% of footpaths in the county are classified as 'easy to use'. This compares to the County Council average of 69% and places Essex 30th out of 34 counties.

Path problem report forms can be found at:
or:

<http://www.useyourpaths.info/report.php>

<http://www.ramblers.org.uk/campaigns/report.html>.

The Festival of Winter Walks....

....may seem a long time off, but now is the time to start planning your publicity.

Assuming that you have already put the walks in your programme, now is the time to sort out some photographs to accompany the articles you are going to send to local papers, (now is also the time to get someone to write the articles).

If you send the text and the number of copies you want to the secretary, he will arrange for you to receive A4 posters on a coloured background

**Last year 400
people were
recruited during
the Festival,
let's try and do
even better this
year**

Visit Central Office for the Day

If you would like to spend the day at the RA headquarters on the Albert Embankment, on 28th September with a lunch provided, let the secretary know by the end of August.

**ESSEX AREA
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More Updates from the Secretary

Undercover Information Required

We are receiving an increasing number of reports concerning a walking group, unconnected with The Ramblers, causing offence in and around pubs by consuming their own food without permission.

If you can get some hard evidence of these misdemeanours, please inform the Area Secretary.

We are keen to show our support for publicans and the important role they play in the economy of the local communities and view any actions which undermine walkers relationship with them as very serious indeed. (Sometime in the future we are hoping to produce a booklet on Pub Protocol for Walkers).

Diary Dates

13-20 Aug:	Essex Area Short Linked, Circular Walks
14 Aug:	SE Essex 13 mile Challenge Walk
3-11 Sept:	Essex Hundred
12 Sept:	Executive Committee
17-25 Sept:	Welcome to Walking Week
18 Sept:	National Walking Day, in conjunction with ITV
22 Sept:	In Town without my Car Day, (part of WWW)
11 Oct:	Area Council
15 Oct:	Ann McLarens's 30th Anniverasary walk
27 Oct:	Finance Meeting, Trinity Methodist Church, Chelmsford
6 Dec:	Executive Committee
26 Dec-2 Jan:	Festival of Winter Walks
2006	
9 Jan:	Area Council
31 Jan:	Executive Committee
4 Feb:	Essex Area AGM (followed by AC) in Witham Community Centre
4 April:	Executive Committee
21-23 April:	General Council – Keele University
8 May:	Area Council
24 June-2 July:	Use Your Paths Week and Area Campaign
18 July:	Executive Committee
18 Sept:	Area Council
28 Nov:	Executive Committee
2007	
15 Jan:	Area Council

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