

Essex Area Update

WWW.RAMBLERS.ORG.UK

Volume 2 Issue 1

May 2004

Important

- Secretaries are asked to check that we have their correct address.
- Lets us know if you wish others to receive the EAU
- Please let us have an e-mail contact for your Group
- Send material for inclusion in EAU by 15th of each month

National Award for West Essex Group

Frank Holzman, Chair of WEG was cock-a-hoop last month when he learnt that his party of volunteers had won a National award from the RA. The award recognises the *outstanding work on public rights of way and in particular the sheer volume of work completed, and their close liaison with the District Council.*

The award is particularly timely given the emphasis that the Essex Area Chair Colin Jacobs is beginning to place on Volunteering and his concern to achieve the charitable objects of the Ramblers' Association.

The West Essex Group's work is based on a system of **parish adopters**—each adopter is responsible for one of the 26 parishes in the area. Surveys are carried out and these are reported to quarterly meetings with **Epping Forest Countrycare**, an arm of the Epping District Council's RoW Department. At these meetings work programmes are drawn up and the working party volunteers are informed.

Pre-1994 these **working parties** were totally run and tooled up by the Group itself. Now, tools, insurance, training, transport and supervision are supplied by Countrycare. About 30 members of the group regularly take part in the working parties and the Group as whole sometimes contributes to the costs via donations. Frequently the Council can get matching grants for the work by assigning notional wages for the work of the Group. If we count the parish adopters and the manual workers about 60 members of the Group are involved in this activity.

During the years 1994—2003 the working party has, among other things, planted 229 way-mark posts, built 44 bridges, installed 5 kissing gates and carried out 52 path clearances.

Update on the Web Thanks to **Colchester Group's** publicity and IT Officer, John Watts, you can now view the latest **EAU** in its original glorious colour on the Colchester Group Web Site which can be accessed at www.colchester-ramblers.ccom.co.uk/.

More News From Colchester

The Parish Council's claim for the path from Mulberry Green to Easthorpe church via Little Bircholt Farm has been successful. It has been decided that a bridleway exists and an order will be made in due course. *No more road extensive walking through Copford! Mags*



Writing the Wrong—the lead article in last December’s issue of EAU caused the hottest reaction of any in the short life of the publication. Dave Cullington wrote a detailed criticism which was discussed at the last Area Council, he has kindly produced an abbreviated version.

For the benefit of new readers we have interspersed the paragraphs of the original article with his commentary.

When the programmes went shooting out with their Christmas Greetings in November were we really catering for the bulk of our membership?

"Are we really catering for the bulk of our membership?" Answer - NO! 80% of the membership do not respond to any communication, so how can we cater for them?

Recently there has been considerable consternation at Area level that AGMs and committee meetings of some Groups have betrayed an abysmal level of understanding about what the Area and, more importantly, the National Organisation is all about.

"Considerable consternation at area level" and "Abysmal level of understanding" by some groups REALLY?!! Consternation has not been evident at area meetings, but let's put the point the other way round. How well do area and the national organisation understand members? They shouldn't forget that members provide the bulk of association finances.

We have received reports that area concerns are considered to be 'boring' and one respondent reported a view that new members should be discouraged because, "... it would make the walking groups too large to be enjoyable".

The latter remark gives the clue to the problem—some Groups see the organisation of Group Walks as their main concern, they see themselves as walking clubs.

This effectively states that groups see themselves as walking clubs. Perhaps it is because they see "The Ramblers Association as an "Association of Ramblers". If the principle purpose is different, area and national should explain this, then those wishing to walk can join real walking clubs.

The Officers however are keen to emphasise that only a small fraction of RA members walk with these groups and those that do (as we have pointed out before) remain in membership for a shorter time; know less about the aims and objects of the RA; and contribute less to activities like footpath maintenance and monitoring than non group-walkers.

What "Officers"? Even if correct, why don't they remain in membership. Why do they contribute less? Why are they disenchanted, and why aren't the "officers" finding the answers? Until we know, aren't recruitment efforts wasted?

In short, many Groups are concentrating their energies and resources on a minority.

Back to paragraph 1! Groups cater for the majority whose needs are known.

With the potential expansion of Stansted and the plans for increased housing along the M11 corridor, we desperately need an increase in our politically (with a small p) active membership.

A small start might be made by sending representatives to the Recruitment Meeting on January 10.

The need for a more active membership is understood, but volunteers are not encouraged if they get "slagged off" in articles like this.

DAVID CULLINGTON.

The South East Essex Group and Southend Council invite you to take part in the 5th Southend-on-Sea Challenge Walk on Sunday 15 August 2004

Circular 23 miles in 10 hours walk starting 8.30 am from Southend Leisure and Tennis Centre, Garon Park, Eastern Avenue, Southend-on-Sea GR898875. The walk encompasses Southend seafront & surrounding countryside including Hadleigh Castle Country Park, The Great Wood, Belfairs Park, the Hockley Valley passing Cherry Orchard Jubilee Country Park and footpaths of Sutton & Shopland. Entry £5 which includes certificate for those completing the Walk, cold drinks and light refreshments, including delicious bread pudding, at checkpoints. Hot food at the finish. No dogs or runners.

Contact Joyce Law, S.E. Essex Group, on 01702 525860 or ray.law@ukgateway.net for entry form.

Please contact Len Banister if you need any help with advertising, sponsorship or recruitment. He can help you produce resources, posters etc and arrange for printing— much of which will be financed by the Area..

Contact:

talkingwalking@aol.com

41 Gordon Avenue
E4 9QT

020 8527 8158

Rambler Friendly Pubs

Mike Richards, Walks Secretary - Maldon & Dengie Hundred Group sent this magnificent contribution to the series kicked off by Kevin Ascott

First a correction to Part 2 - The Railway Arms @ Southminster does not exist. As a Southminster resident, I advise you that The Railway closed some 12 years ago, was knocked down and an apartment block now sits on the site. Your contributor probably meant The Station Arms which although Rambler Friendly is not a food pub - will get rolls in if ordered at start of walk and offer just two fillings, so I wonder if that meets your criteria.

Second, I submit others for inclusion with apologies if there are any duplications with Part 1 as I seem to have mislaid that edition of Essex Update:-

White Horse, Mundon (since arrival of new landlord last month); Green Man, Bradwell Waterside; Cuckoo, Radley Green; Black Buoy, Wivenhoe; Compasses, Little Green; Viper, Mill Green; St Anne's Castle, Great Leighs; Fox & Hounds, Ramsden Bellhouse; Queen's Head, Tolleshunt D'Arcy; Old Ship, Heybridge Basin; Red Lion, Finchingfield; Bell Inn, Castle Hedingham; Queen Victoria, Woodham Walter; The Three Ashes, Cressing; Shepherd & Dog, Langham; The Horse & Groom, Galleywood; Queen's Head, Fyfield; Rose & Crown, Ashdon; Queen's Head, Boreham; Pig & Whistle, Chignall Smealey; Three Elms, Chignall St James; Cricketers Inn, Coggeshall; Fox & Hounds, Cock Clarks; Windmill Tavern, East Hanningfield; Dog & Pheasant, East Mersea; Green Man, Howe Street; Green Man, Little Braxted; Old Crown Inn, Messing (but have not visited since landlord change last October); Butchers Arms, North End (Great Waltham); Ferry Boat Inn, North Fambridge; Kings Head, Pebmarsh; Bell, Purleigh (Kevin Ascott may not like this local near to him but both my group and Essex & Herts LDWA have always been welcomed and well looked after); Bell, Retendon; Crown, Sandon (currently being restored after recent fire); White Lion, Sible Hedingham; White Hart, Stebbing; Hoop, Stock; Three Compasses, West Hanningfield; Chequers, Wickham Bishops; Hurdlemakers Arms, Woodham Mortimer; Anchor Inn, Rowhedge.

Have only included those pubs successfully used by Maldon & Dengie Hundred Group whose members demand good real ale and wholesome bar snacks at sensible prices - we now have only one regular Tuesday walker who brings own sandwiches. I think I have covered all that are on our "repeat" list. Hope this is helpful.

Many thanks Mike. Two issues ago I suggested that I would collate an area directory of pubs but the appeal for information has been so successful (see page 4 as well) that this might be one job too far for me! If anyone out there would be willing to put the material together I would certainly assist with its presentation and production.
Len Banister

The Age of Discovery is still with usKevin Ascott, short of a bit of bed time reading was pouring over the odd definitive map (as you do) when low and behold he came across a bridleway unknown to and therefore unused by the Maldon Group.

On Explorer 183 it runs from the junction with the BR at GR 83300560 and goes NE on a well defined track to exit at the A 414 by Knowles Farm GR 83950575 and forms a potentially valuable link, not more than 0.7KM long beside, but avoiding the A414

The Havering & East London Group position of Secretary is now covered by Ken Richards, who has been the Group's Information Officer. (See page 4) However, the Footpath Secretary is still covering the three London Boroughs which form the Group's territory and also the function of Countryside Secretary to two, as well as several other walking related positions and has appealed for assistance.

So volunteers local to its three Boroughs of Barking & Dagenham, Havering and Newham are still needed to assist in some of the functions.

Please contact Michael Cullen if you might be able to assist. even just noting path details for him to update the ROWDAM computer system will be appreciated. His details are: phone: 01708-379583, e-mail: michaelcullen@compuserve.com or by post: 2 Whitmore Avenue, Harold Wood, ROMFORD, RM3 0WY

Walking Facts & Figures part 2

Walking is the nearest activity to perfect exercise. Rising inactivity is most likely an even more important factor than bad diet in the dramatic rise in obesity.

- Obesity levels in England have risen by around 50% in a decade and the trend is still upward.
- More than one in five English adults are obese
- Almost a third of English children are either overweight or obese
- 24 million British adults may be overweight or obese (Department for Health 2003)
- Obesity is now the second biggest cause of death after cancer (World Health Organisation 2001)

Rambles Secretaries who are presently composing their next walks programme may have some items which would appeal to other Groups. If you send them in to EAU now they could appear in programmes right across the County in the August programmes.

Remember

We are hoping that each of our existing members will try their best to recruit a new member to the RA this year (preferably before the end of May).

Potential members do not have to be interested in Group Walking but they should have an interest in walking, the countryside and preserving Rights of Way.

Adrian's Update

From now on, notice can be served requesting any Highway Authority to make sure that a **footpath obstruction** is removed within two months—after this an application can be made to a magistrates' court requiring the Authority to take specified steps. Highway Authorities have been informed of their **Local Transport Plan Settlements**. The RA wants to know how many of these settlements include provision for work on the rights of way network. Many thanks for all of you who

responded to our request for responses to DEFRA's consultation paper on the **Use of mechanically propelled vehicles on rights of way**.

Rambles Secretaries are asked to send in details of their Group's contribution to **Welcome to Walking Week**. All group secretaries have been sent forms for the purpose. If you return these by 31 May you will be entered for a prize draw.

If you are interested in joining a **Walking with Neighbours** event sponsored by the European Ramblers' Association on 12 Sept which will involve crossing the Channel joining Dutch and Belgium walkers and staying over one night, contact Peter Ayling on 01482 657240, or email peter.ayling@virgin.net

Dates

19 to 25 June Footpaths Week
31 July– 8 Aug FEAST 2004
15 Aug—Southend-on-Sea Challenge Walk *(see page 2)*
29 Aug-5 Sept Autumn Walk
18-26 Sept Welcome to Walking Week
22 Sept European Car Free Day
26 Dec-1 Jan 05 Festival of Winter walks

Copy for the June Edition by 15 May *please*

ESSEX HORSE & PONY PROTECTION SOCIETY

Please come and join our annual Sponsored Walk on Sunday, 20th June. We start at Leigh-on-Sea Station at 10.30 o'clock and walk the coast to East Beach at Shoeburyness – about 10 miles. EHPPS staff and volunteers work tirelessly to safeguard the welfare of Essex's maltraeted and abandoned horses. We are entirely donation-funded, so we hope you will be able to raise some money for us while enjoying a fun-filled morning meander. Contact Marian Foster on 01268 584603 for sponsorship forms.

Articles of all kinds and adverts

which may be of interest to other Groups are always welcome.

They can be handwritten but it is preferred if they are typed or sent by email.

If you type pieces, please use a clean ribbon, make corrections separately and avoid italics (all this is to ensure that the document can be easily scanned).

Diagrams and photographs may also be sent but it is unlikely that these will be included in the email version.

If you have had difficulty in downloading unformatted versions of EAU, it can be supplied in a uniform font which seems to work for some.

Building the Area Directory

We're pleased to report that **Havering & East London** now have a new Secretary:

Ken Richards
26 Arundel Road
Harold Wood
Romford
RM3 0RT
(01708 375 559)

If you would like up to date area directories which comprise Executive Committee Members, Group Secretaries, Group Chairs and Footpath Secretaries please contact Len Banister for email versions or Adrian Vincent-Jones for hard copies.

Rambler Friendly Pubs regular readers will know that we have included two lists assembled by Kevin Ascott. Following an appeal we have had a really detailed list of over 70 items from **Redbridge** which includes tea shops besides pubs. The amount of information in spreadsheet form is too much for **EAU** but we can send you an e-mail Excel version (from Len) or a hard copy from (Adrian).

Christine Parr of **Rochford & Castle Point** has helpfully assembled our previous entries on a spreadsheet which I am sure she would share. christine.parr2@btinternet.com

RECRUITMENT LEAFLETS

Phone or e-mail Len Banister if you would like a supply of the new recruitment leaflets (which include the reduced individual and family categories).

020 8527 8158

talkingwalking@aol.com