



**Essex Area Update**

**Volume 9. July 2010. Issue 3.**

**The newsletter of the Ramblers' Association Essex Area**

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**Registered office: 2nd floor, Camelford House, 87-90 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TW.”**

**Editor  
Len Banister  
talkingwalking@aol.com  
020 8527 8158**

**Your friends and colleagues can get their own copy simply by emailing:**

**[talkingwalking@aol.com](mailto:talkingwalking@aol.com)**

**Or take a look at our website:**

**[www.essexarearamblers.co.uk](http://www.essexarearamblers.co.uk)**

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One of the reasons for this issue being delayed is that I spent a week in Derbyshire (thoroughly enjoyable although it rained every day). On three of the six days of walking I had conversations with walkers: at Monsal Head I met Philip Greswell, Countryside Secretary for the Hertfordshire and N Middx Area together with colleagues (Philip often features in *EAU* and has a letter in this edition – he did a tremendous amount of work on behalf of the Ramblers in the anti-Standed Expansion campaign). Along Stanage Edge I met a Group of Sheffield Ramblers, several of whom I had met at General Council. In a pub in Parwich I joined six walkers who had left the Ramblers en bloc because they believed all the propaganda of the Concerned Ramblers – by the end of that conversation I am hopeful that they will all be returning to the fold.

Len.

### **Contact your local Councillor, Len.**

A few months ago I wrote about the importance of maintaining the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) Service against the background of prevailing cuts.

The fact that it takes a miniscule slice of the Highways Budget of any Authority makes it an easy target. However, it is because the budget is so small that Councillors would be advised to look much more closely at this particular area of expenditure.

As some of you will know, I do quite a bit of writing for magazines and the occasional book - mostly on walking. Whenever I write a new walk there are generally some small problems associated with paths so I am in frequent touch with PRoW Services all over England and Wales and am in a good position to compare the quality.

Seven or eight years ago I wrote a book called *Drive and Stroll in Essex*. I was subsequently delighted that the book sold out and that the publishers asked me to revise it for a second edition.

Last year I re-walked the routes. There were some major changes required: the new A120 had appeared, slicing through one walk; pubs had closed down; and some paths had been diverted.

Most of the changes reflected the hard work of Ramblers, Parish Paths Partnerships and above all, the PRoW area services. Gates had replaced stiles; bridges had been built across streams; paths had been opened up so that the sun could dry them out; drainage and steps had been installed.

Any time I point out a problem I receive a rapid acknowledgement and in most cases, over time, the problem is corrected.

This was not always the case. It is only over the last three or four years that the management of the PRoW Services has resulted in the highly effective organisation that compares well with any in the country. It would be devastating if, after all this effort, the service were to be depleted.

Essex was at one time was one worst Counties, in terms of its PRoW network; a revolution has occurred and now it is one of the best. We owe it to all those who have made such a great effort to do all in our power to ensure that this quality is maintained.

**Please contact your local Councillor** and explain the importance of the paths network to yourself and your friends; tell them how easy-to-use paths mean that more are encouraged to walk.

Draw attention to the fact that walking leads people to use rural facilities and contributes to local economies by many millions of pounds a year; that because they walk, people are fitter and therefore cost the National Health Service less. In other words, it makes sense, in purely economic terms to support the upkeep and improvement of Public Rights of Way.

.....by the way; the new edition of *Drive and Stroll in Essex* by Len Banister and published by Countryside Books (ISBN 978 1 85306 839 3) is now on sale, price £7.95.

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**Reg. Brown.**

The funeral took place on 15<sup>th</sup> July of Reg Brown, a main player in the unique Essex Ramblers Friends movement. Along with Margaret, his wife, he was a Founder Member of the Lea Valley Friends Group and had been Chair since its inception. He will be greatly missed by all of us who knew him.

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**The 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Baton Walks.**

By now Group Secretaries will have been contacted by the Hazel Jarrold, Area Chair, telling them of the Area’s decision that all Groups should hold their own Anniversary Baton walks or combine with a neighbouring group to do so. Hopefully, full details of the London Loop baton walk will appear elsewhere – it is likely to be three days longer than originally planned so that can start from City Hall with appropriate personalities. The dates are Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> - Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October. We want as many people as possible to walk part of the Loop and ask those in the London Boroughs to officially support one of the legs.

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**Lost Ways Research.**

Lucy Fletcher of the South East Essex Group has agreed to undertake research into paths, which for all kinds of reasons have been left off the definitive 4 maps.

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**Congratulations**

To Peter Cozens who has taken on the role of Footpath Secretary for the Epping Forest District.

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**Reporting Paths Advice Note.**

Mags Hobby, the Area Footpath Secretary, has published a clear four- page note describing all you need to know about report a footpath problem. This will be emailed to all EAU readers as an additional mailing (some of you may not have the capacity to receive both publications together).

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**Cantab Rambler**

.....is a privately produced magazine, organised by two Cambridgeshire Ramblers, Roger & Janet Moreton. It appears roughly every two months and is written, often in a contemplative vein, about the joys and sometimes difficulties of walking - the views expressed are solely those of the editor, or of the author of an individual item. The e-mail version is available free and is highly recommended by the editor of EAU.

Contact: e-mail [roger.janet@care4free.net](mailto:roger.janet@care4free.net)

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## 100. Good Ideas from Volunteers.

Volunteers share their top tips for: boosting group membership, using funds effectively, putting on varied walks programmes, and keeping public paths clear. (News - posted 18th June 2010)

Are you struggling to increase your Groups' membership? Are you a treasurer trying to make ends meet? Do you despair at keeping your local footpaths clear? Do you need inspiration on new walks ideas?

Volunteers have come up with a hundred good ideas to help inspire you. They were generated at four 'Good Ideas' sessions at this year's General Council.

Tom Franklin, Chief Executive, said, "*These are all suggestions from volunteers on what they have found works for them. There are so many good ideas and initiatives in local Groups, we thought it would be good to share these more widely*"

Go to:

<http://www.ramblers.org.uk/Volunteer/News/100+Good+Ideas+from+Volunteers>

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## Epping Forest.

Please click on our events page for details of our Summer Walks Programme (available as PDF download): -

[http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation/LGNL\\_Services/Environment\\_and\\_planning/Parks\\_and\\_open\\_spaces/Epping\\_Forest/EF\\_events.htm](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/Corporation/LGNL_Services/Environment_and_planning/Parks_and_open_spaces/Epping_Forest/EF_events.htm)

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This summer **FLEET: ART IN THE HAVEN PORTS** will bring art and artists to unusual locations along the Essex and Suffolk Coast.

Led by artist Gavin Turk, FLEET offers a series of unique experiences and encounters highlighting historic locations not generally known as traditional tourist attractions.

The sites and places included in the project can all be reached by, train by bicycle bus or foot. The leaflet attached will help you plan your tour. FLEET, has been developed by Commissions East in partnership with Essex and Suffolk County Councils, Sustrans and partners in France.

**Jaywick Martello Tower** is one of the key venues in FLEET. Highlights include cycle rides in Essex and Suffolk lead by Gavin Turk who has customised bicycles in bright colours to create an art spectacle (see attached images – available in high resolution).

**The Essex Fleet Bike Ride from Jaywick to Harwich is on 3<sup>rd</sup> July at 10.30 am**

**The Suffolk Bike Ride from Ipswich Town Hall to Landguard Ford is on 17 July at 2pm.**

They are open to the public and if you are interested in participating or know anyone who would like to come please contact Commissions East directly to book a place Tel: 01353 669094.

Artist Sarah Dobai has created an innovative film that will be shown at **Jaywick Martello Tower 14<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> July**. You can meet Sarah and hear about her approach on **18<sup>th</sup> July 2pm** to book a place on 01353 669094. For more information about the activities at the Tower please visit [www.jaywickmartellotower.org](http://www.jaywickmartellotower.org)

Other Essex projects include residencies by artists Sarah Dobai and Fabien Rigobert at Jaywick Martello Tower, a talk by Ken Worpole at Redoubt Fort, Harwich; a screening of “Les Hommes” by French artist filmmaker Ariane Michel at the Electric Palace Cinema, Harwich; and new work by Julian Meredith at Mistle Towers.

For further information about FLEET please visit [www.fleet-art.org](http://www.fleet-art.org)

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### **Walk'em Forest**

While sitting in front of a computer screen can't usually be claimed to help you get fit, there's a website that aims at least to help you put the best foot forward.

Whether you want to find a quick n' easy route to the shops or simply plan a sunny Sunday afternoon wander, walkit.com not only helps you plan your journey but also tells you how many calories you'll burn and how much carbon you'll save by walking rather than driving or taking public transport.

As well as mapping out your walk, giving you step-by-step instructions and telling you how long it'll take, walkit.com also gives you the choice to choose a direct route, a more leisurely option or even the one with the least air pollution.

Giving the site a go for himself, Waltham Forest's Cabinet Member for Environment, Cllr Clyde Loakes, said: “While it's not always practical to substitute a car or bus for your own two feet, it nonetheless shows how there's a simple, viable alternative to many of our day-to-day journeys.

“Walking is probably the easiest and cheapest means of getting around and getting some exercise there is, and almost everyone has a pair of trainers or comfy shoes knocking around the house - walkit.com makes it all the more simple and shows how you're benefiting the environment as well as your waistline.”

For more information call the Council's Air Quality Officer on 020 8496 3000. To start planning your next stroll visit [www.walkit.com](http://www.walkit.com)

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## Walks organisers – please note

From 1 August 2010 all Ramblers walks of 5 miles/8km or less listed on the Group Walks Finder will be branded with the Walk4Life brand in England and Wales and the Active Nation brand in Scotland. We are also asking Areas and Groups to support the Walk4Life ITV campaign in September. (News and action request - posted 8 June 2010)

Read more at <http://www.ramblers.org.uk/Volunteer/News/walk4lifeupdate>

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## This month's Ramblers Newsletter on-line:

<http://mailing.ramblers.org.uk/rp//143/process.clsp?EmailId=66365&Token=2245EEDED13769556A64CCD4C3BA01FF8>

## 75th Anniversary Volunteer Awards

*To celebrate our 75th Anniversary a special award is being run for volunteers who have gone that bit further to help the organisation achieve its aims*

Every year Ramblers Volunteers give thousands of hours to the organisation using a myriad of different skills. This ranges from leading walks to clearing footpaths and from campaigning to raising the organisations profile in the local media or creating newsletters and web pages.

To recognise this, the Ramblers are running a 75th Anniversary Award Ceremony. Any volunteer can be nominated for an award in the following categories:

- 1. Membership Award** – This award would go to somebody who has worked on making sure that the process of joining a Group or Area is as welcoming, easy and simple as possible.
- 2. Led Walks** – This award would go to somebody who has not only grown the number of people attending Ramblers Led Walks but also made them as interesting as possible.
- 3. Growing the organization** – This would go to somebody who has grown their Group or Area membership and/or put an induction process in place that makes new volunteers feel welcome.
- 4. Campaigner Award** – This would go to somebody who has had a major campaign success at either Local, Group, Area or Country Level. The campaign should have had a positive impact on and involved members of the community.
- 5. Introducing people to walking** – This Award is aimed at volunteers who have successfully managed to introduce a section of the community to walking.
- 6. Successful Committee Member** – This would go to a member of the Group or Area Committee who has worked to make sure the organisation can function.

**7. Partnership Award** – This would go to somebody who has worked successfully with a local council or other organisation to ensure a positive outcome for walkers in the local area.

**8. Media Award** – This award would go to a volunteer who has successfully worked to get their Group or Area in the local media on a regular basis to help create a positive image in the local community.

Nominations for the Awards are open until the 1st October 2010. A panel of judges from across the organization will pick the winners.

You will also be able to request certificates for volunteers at Group and Area level.

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**Letters**

Daphne writes:

    Hello Len,

        I read the following in the Daily Telegraph 31<sup>st</sup>.May.2010

**Green Belt. by Robert Winnett.**

Green belt land surrounding more than30 towns and cities is to be protected from housing developments ordered by the Labour Government.

Eric Pickles, the Communities Secretary, will today write to councils in areas where the Green Belt has been threatened saying they are now free to block the developments.

He said, ” It will no longer be possible to concrete over large swathes of the country without any regard to what local people want”.

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Hi there,

Just to clarify the planned timetable for the Baton Walks.

The Ramblers website at <http://www.ramblers.org.uk/Volunteer/News/Archived-news-stories-July-to-August-2009/75th+Anniversary.htm#When> details when the Baton walks by area. It suggests checking your location via the Government offices website at <http://www.gos.gov.uk/national>

The shows that Essex is in the East of England region and therefore our Baton walks are due to be held in September.

Hope this clarifies the dates.

Best wishes,

Kevin Clark

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Secretary Colchester Ramblers

Essex Area Secretary

Dear Colleagues,

**More good news**

I am sure you will be pleased to hear that the second runway application at Stansted Airport has been withdrawn. So, we can look forward to enjoying our walks in Hertfordshire, which will for the moments at least, be as tranquil as is possible now that an airport the size of Heathrow, which would have been the outcome, is no longer a threat.

Long may it remain that way?

Please feel free to forward this to your colleagues and friends who may be interested.

Best wishes

Philip Greswell,

Countryside Secretary,

Hertfordshire and N Middx Area,

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Len,

Thanks for the June Essex Area Update.

I was interested to note that your comments on General Council were taken from the Concerned Rambler's update of 25<sup>th</sup>. April without making clear that this was the case. I would have thought that you might not necessarily have agreed with all they said.

In particular, it was far from a complete account.

See below, for your information, some of my own thoughts!

John.

Michael, (Church)

I have forwarded your email to members of my Area committee and group secretaries with the following preface:

The following account of the General Council meeting by the "Concerned Ramblers" is selective, concentrating on the issues of interest to their steering group (and not even all of those). I understand our Area delegates are working on a more comprehensive summary.

In general, though, what follows more or less coincides with my recollections, though I might question one or two points of interpretation (for example the use, or implication, of the word "surprised" in the second paragraph under the heading "Motions").

Underlying all, though, is the "Concerned Ramblers" continued insistence (despite all assurances to the contrary) that we have somehow lost our focus on footpath and access issues. The "change" they say it is time for continues to seem to me more backward looking than indicative of any desire to adapt.

Regards,  
John Esslemont  
Chairman, Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes and West Middlesex Area  
Ramblers' Association

**(Editors Note:** I agree that the account was selective...but then, we in Essex have grown accustomed to the selectivity of the Concerned Ramblers grouping).

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Hi Len

Thanks very much for this. In case anyone asks, it was not the Ramblers that got the paths reopened on the Isle of Man (a piece in our last edition –Ed). While we did give some advice to the person leading the campaign, as a British charity we are unable to campaign outside Britain.

Ade

Adrian Morris,

Head of Walking Environment.

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**Ramblers Greater London Forum 75<sup>th</sup> Baton Walk****London Loop****Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2010****The first two days are still to be organised****Sections will follow more or less David Sharp's Aurum Press guide:**

October:

- Friday 8<sup>th</sup> Erith Riverside to Old Bexley Village 8.5 miles (13.5 Km)  
 Start: Erith Riverside - Event in Riverside gardens  
 Lunch: half way is Thames Road but not suitable. TBA  
 Afternoon photo opportunity: Hall Place  
 Finish: Bexley Stn
- Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> Old Bexley Village to Jubilee CP 7.25 miles (11.5Km)  
 Start: Bexley Stn car park  
 Lunch: Sidcup Place – also photo opportunity  
 Finish: Petts Wood Stn
- Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> Jubilee CP to West Wickham Common 9 miles (14.5Km)  
 Start: Petts Wood Stn – photo opportunity Jubilee CP  
 Lunch: High Elms CP – picnic check tea shop open  
 Photo opportunity: High Elms CP  
 Finish: Hayes Stn
- Monday 11<sup>th</sup> West Wickham Common to Hamsey Green 8.5 miles (13.5Km)  
 Start: Hayes Stn photo opportunity West Wickham Common,  
 Sparrows Den, Addington Hills, Heathfield  
 Lunch: Sandrock/Addington Hills  
 Finish: Hamsey Green – bus 403 to Croydon
- Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> Hamsey Green to Banstead Downs 10 miles (16Km)  
 Start: Hamsey Green (bus 403 from Croydon)  
 Photo opportunity: Kenley Common,  
 Lunch: The Fox (after 3 miles), Cafe in recreation park near Coulsdon South  
 Pub at Clock House but no place for picnic  
 Photo opportunities: Farthing Downs, Oaks Park,  
 Finish: Banstead Stn
- Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup>  
 Banstead Downs to Kingston Bridge 10.75 miles (17.5Km)  
 Start: Banstead Stn  
 Photo opportunity: Nonsuch Park  
 Lunch: Hogsmill Tavern  
 Photo opportunity: Berrylands open space  
 Finish: Kingston Bridge for Kingston Stn
- Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> Kingston Bridge to Donkey Wood/Hatton Cross 9 miles (14.5Km)  
 Start: Kingston Bridge from the Stn  
 Photo opportunity/event: Bushy Park  
 Lunch: Teddington pubs or picnic in Bushy Park  
 Photo opportunity: Crane Park (Shot Tower), Hounslow Heath  
 Finish: Hatton Cross
- Friday 15<sup>th</sup> Donkey Wood to Uxbridge Lock 10.5 miles (17Km)  
 Start: Hatton Cross  
 Photo opportunity: Cranford Park, Grand Union Canal  
 Lunch: West Drayton  
 Photo opportunity: Little Britain  
 Finish: Uxbridge Stn (leave Canal before lock)
- Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> Uxbridge Lock to Moor Park 9.25 miles (15Km)  
 Start: Uxbridge Stn  
 Photo opportunity: Uxbridge Lock, Denham CP

- Lunch: Harefield West Lock  
 Photo opportunity: Bishops Wood CP, Batchwood Heath  
 Finish: Moor Park Stn
- Sunday 17th Moor Park to Elstree 11.5 miles (18.5Km)  
 Start: Moor Park Stn  
 Photo opportunity: Manor of the Rose  
 Lunch: Old Redding/Case Pub (also photo opportunity)  
 Photo opportunity: Aldenham Reservoir  
 Finish: Elstree & Borehamwood Stn
- Monday 18th Elstree to Cockfosters 10.5 miles (17Km)  
 Start: Elstree & Borehamwood Stn  
 Photo opportunity Scratchwood Open Space, Moat Mount Open Space  
 Lunch (late) Old Red Lion at Barnet  
 Photo opportunity: Monken Hadley  
 Finish: Cockfosters Stn
- Tuesday 19th Cockfosters to Enfield Lock 8.5 miles (13.7Km)  
 Start: Cockfosters Stn  
 Photo opportunity Trent Park  
 Lunch: Clay Hill  
 Finish: Enfield Lock Stn
- Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> Enfield Lock to Chigwell 8 miles (12.9Km)  
 Start: Enfield Lock Stn  
 Photo opportunity: Enfield Lock  
 Lunch: Chingford  
 Photo opportunity: Roding Valley  
 Finish: Chigwell Stn
- Thursday 21st Chigwell to Harold Wood 10.75 miles (17.3KM)  
 Start: Chigwell Stn  
 Photo opportunities: Hainault Forest CP, Havering-atte-Bower  
 Lunch: Havering- atte-Bower  
 Photo opportunities: Central park, Harold Wood  
 Finish: Harold Wood Stn
- Friday 22th Harold Wood to Purfleet 13.75 miles (22.1Km)  
 Start: Harold Wood Stn  
 Photo opportunity: ?  
 Lunch: Upminster Bridge?  
 Photo opportunities: Hornchurch CP, Ingrebourne Hill  
 Finish 1) Rainham Stn and onto 2) Purfleet  
 Event at Rainham – by River Thames opposite Erith.

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**Dates, for your Diary.**

**Diary Dates for 2010**

05/07/2010...Executive Council

17/08/2010...Footpath Committee **was on** 18/08/2010

24/09/2010...Area Council **was on** 20/09/2010

6-22 October **RGLF London Loop baton walk**

01/12/2010...Footpath Committee

13/12/2010...Executive Council

**Diary Dates for 2011**

10/01/2011...Area Council

24/01/**2011**...Executive Council

13/04/2011...Footpath Committee

25/04/2011...Executive Council - **this date will be changed**

16/05/2011...Area Council

04/07/2011...Executive Council

17/08/2011...Footpath Committee

19/09/2011...Area Council

30/11/2011...Footpath Committee

12/12/2011...Executive Council – TBC