

RYA EAST NEWS

TARGET IS BE ACTIVE FIVE TIMES A WEEK

THE Government's aim is to get 70 per cent of the population to carry out a physical activity at least five times a week, according to Sport England East development officer, Kevin Wray.

His statement raised some eyebrows and chuckles at this year's RYA East Club Forum at Royal Harwich Yacht Club. "Sport is only eight per cent of people's activity," he declared.

"Sailing nationally is to receive £130M



KEVIN WRAY

making it a priority sport. The aim of government is to make this a top sporting nation. The region will make the decision on how it spends its share," he said.

The new Area Sports Plan is monitored by a new Regional Sports Board, whose main aim was to increase sport participation, raise the level of

performance, make access to sport easier and improve the communities' health.

"It's been shown that sports participation results in stronger and healthier communities, gives local people greater pride, improves education – brings people back into education – and has an overall beneficial effect on the region's economy," said Kevin.

CASCs

Commenting on the introduction of Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs), he said: "You've a choice; stay as you are, become a charity registered CASC or an Inland Revenue registered CASC. You should certainly do so if you are paying tax, including rates, are constructing facilities, or have potential donors. But do not if the members want a share of the assets.

"You must carefully compare the costs and benefits. My advice is to become a CASC registered with the Inland Revenue. The benefits aren't as generous, but the restrictions aren't as onerous. However, once you have registered you can't back out," he warned.



BT Field Services Regional Manager Peter Easy (right) gave The Woolverstone Project a cheque for £500 recently. Club Forum was told more clubs should get involved with disabled sailing.

Many environmentalists claim sailing and the environment don't mix. One of the country's top environmental advisers, Dr Susie Tomson, the RYA's Planning and Environmental Manager told the conference: "Leisure users and the environment do co-exist successfully. The UK's marine environment is diverse, some of it is very fragile, and it's my job to ensure we can co-exist.

RESPONSIBILITY

"Leisure boaters have to take responsibility for maintaining the quality of the environment and must work to see we maintain a sustainable use of the coast, especially with the growth of our

sport," she declared.

"OK, we have free wind, but we must ask ourselves what is the



SUSIE TOMSON

impact of yet more moorings, of anchoring at will, what impact will shoreside facilities such as boat yards, marinas and boat parks have on the intertidal environment?"

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CLUB FORUM GETS THUMBS UP

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Susie, who is renovating a 1933 Harrison Butler Z-four tonner at Woodbridge, is a diver. "As individuals we have no impact, but two million of us doing the same thing will have a big impact. The intertidal areas cope with the tides and support a wide variety of bird life and the mud at the bottom supports a very rich and diverse life, and fortunately most of it lies undisturbed by our passing."

WIND FARMS

Commenting on the growth of potential wind farms round the local east coast, Susie, who is leading the sailing sector's battle for more controlled development told the conference that the planners of Phase II didn't know any recreational boating data existed and formulated the plans without taking into consideration the needs of commercial shipping.

"They're option sites, so we can still make an impact," she declared.

"There is increasing need for development controls to be established, but it's different from land planning and the same rules don't apply," she added.

SAILABILITY

Hugh de Cassis, a trustee of the Woolverstone Project and chairman of the RYA Sailability Liaison Committee urged more clubs to follow the Royal Harwich and Haven Ports clubs in

setting up or being closely linked to centres for disabled sailing.

"It doesn't need to cost a fortune to get disabled people into sailing. It's very rewarding for the clubs who do and disabled sailors themselves can bring a lot to a club. They are an asset.

"There's no reason why a club shouldn't welcome disabled sailors into its ranks. If they're not then they should be," he declared.

"There are practical problems but none I know of that aren't surmountable. Remember, disabilities come in many forms – even being unable to speak the local language is a form of disablement.

"So many clubs won't get involved because they find it a bit scary. All you have to do is ask! They're in charge of their own lives, they're very proactive people. Getting good instructors can be difficult and a lack of paid instructors can slow down the development of a project. But the ultimate aim must be to get them into the mainstream of sailing," he said.

He warned clubs to beware the Disabled Discrimination legislation – "it's not been at all well thought out. But most importantly it's all about having the right attitude of mind," he added.

In a double-headed presentation a little reminiscent of Morecombe and Wise, Chris Edwards, chairman of the regional training panel and Derek Burchell, the regional coach made a plea to



Top: A section of the audience (no one went to sleep!)

Centre: Dr Susie Tomson, organiser Terry Corner, Commodore of RHYC and regional vice-chairman, Chris Edward – still smiling!.

Bottom: The Morecombe and Wise of East Coast sailing – Derek Burchell, regional coach (left) and Chris Edwards, chairman of the regional training panel explain the need to get more youngsters into sailing.

clubs to get more involved in youth training.

Chris said: "We perceive there's a problem; at the grass roots young people are not joining sailing clubs. This should be tackled at club level. The regional training panel will support you. It is

not a funding body, but it will help you formulate a youth sailing strategy in your club. It is essential though that you have a person who acts as the driving force. Give them a good support team, plan for progressive development and

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CONFERENCE DELEGATE HIDES HER LIGHT UNDER A BUSHEL

ONE of the delegates at last weekend's RYA Club Forum at Royal Harwich YC was Margaret Gardiner, the Guide Association Sailing Adviser for Suffolk, and Boating Adviser for the Anglia Region. As principal of the Suffolk Guide Sailing Base (SGSB) at Lackford Lake near Bury St Edmunds she's had a lifelong association with teaching Guides to sail.

For her work with teaching Guides to sail she was recently awarded one of only 16 Torch Trophy Trust Awards made to encourage voluntary work for sport and other outdoor activities at club level throughout the UK.

Margaret has provided sailing sessions for the last two County Camps and for the Regional International Camps, as well as running the Lackford Lake centre. And she admitted to being at the conference because she wants to know how other clubs attract and keep



Margaret Gardiner receives her Torch Award from HRH the Duke of Gloucester.

youngsters in the sport.

Guide sailing and taster days (which include canoeing and sometimes windsurfing) have taken place on Lackford Lake since 1991, as well as sailing from Woodbridge and Slaughden Sailing Club. RYA courses have been run at Lackford since 1994 under the umbrella of the Suffolk Watersports Association to which SGSB is affiliated.

In 1999 Suffolk Guides joined the

National Schools Sailing Association and in 2002 achieved Royal Yachting Association recognition and became a Recognised Teaching Centre.

"There were only 16 awards made last year throughout the UK. I thought it incredible that I should gain a sporting award at my age, but found that I was by no means the eldest. There was a good variety of sports represented, including archery, gymnastics, fencing, cricket, soccer and, of course, sailing," she added.

MAJOR PUSH ON TRAINING

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training, the youngsters need to see it leading somewhere."

Regional coach Derek Burchell added: "Boats are cheap, time isn't. It is vital you get the parents involved; children who stay with sailing have parents who become involved. Train key people in the club, give them training and broaden their outlook."

HPM

New Zone High Performance Manager Bruce Bonar told the conference his first job was to reestablish contact with the Volvo Championship Clubs: "About a third of my time will be spent with these clubs. My role is to help clubs with their junior training and looking for the talented kids who will go forward to the zone squads.

"The squads will be drawn from kids at the summer championships, the autumn weekends and the winter regatta. The policy is to go for open training, which is new at junior and youth levels and means we'll be creating 58 more training opportunities and means 750 sailors will get more training"

He echoed Chris and Derek's call to get more young people into sailing.

"A new role for the Championship Clubs is to help clubs nearby achieve their potential with training.

"There's a need in the Zone to improve communications to help develop training," he added.

DISTRICT COUNCIL MOVES ON CASC FORMATION

ROYAL Harwich Yacht Club could lose its 100 per cent rate relief next year under a review of its discretionary rate relief grant by Babergh District Council.

The Council has advised the club, along with other rateable sports clubs in its area, to register as a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) and automatically get 80 per cent mandatory rate relief under new

Government financial rulings.

The Council is reviewing its discretionary rate relief payable from April 1, 2005 and warns that it could reduce or remove it altogether.

The Council has, however, indicated it may be prepared to offer clubs a discretionary 20 per cent rate relief top-up if they go for CASC registration.

WHERE WERE YOU?

THE RYA East Club Forum aims to help clubs improve their services to members, it is not specifically aimed at dinghy or racing clubs.

What do you think the Club Forum should cover? Would your club host the next Forum?

Let us know - email Garth Cooper on garthword@btinternet with your views.

VOLUNTEERING STRATEGY OUTLINED TO REGIONAL MEETING

DO you have a volunteering strategy in your club? Do you have a Volunteering Co-ordinator in your club? Do you value and reward volunteers in your club?

These are all questions the RYA wants answered in a major review of volunteering that it is carrying out in conjunction with Southampton Institute.

Having a designated volunteering strategy is another Government inspired scheme. It is now national policy for all sports clubs to have such a policy, and the RYA, as one of 17 national sports governing bodies receiving funding for introducing it as policy, has set it as a priority.

Tim Savill, one of the four academics at Southampton Institute who are rolling out the volunteer strategy programme, presented members of the RYA East Regional Committee with an outline of the programme recently.

Each region is being asked to organise a series of Volunteer Support Seminars with the aim of raising awareness of volunteering; encouraging clubs to review their volunteering policy; guide them in giving priority to a policy; encouraging them to share best practice and to explain how clubs can best use the new ryavolunteering.org.uk one-stop advisory website.

"You will not be told how to increase the recruitment or reten-



TIM SAVILL

tion of volunteers and nor will you get 'right' answers. We recognise that every club and its requirement in terms of volunteers is different," Tim told the committee.

He said that volunteers spent an estimated 4.4 million hours each year working for free running sailing clubs. Most wanted to put something back into the sport, but few had clearly defined roles and the opportunities to become volunteers were often limited.

"Our recent questionnaire was responded to by 900 clubs (out of 1500 country-wide) and we followed up with in-depth telephone interviews with senior officers of 45 clubs. From the volunteers point of view, the main concerns were a lack of volunteers, the same group of people doing all the work, no clear guidance on the levels of responsibility and serious worries over ever-increasing litigation.

"We found the majority of ordinary members don't volunteer because they don't see any opportunities to or they don't

have time – they'd quite sensibly rather be sailing than running the club.

"Members wanted more information on volunteering, clearly defined roles and effective club management," he said.

Clubs, he said, should review their volunteering policy, set the priorities for the club activities, appoint a club volunteer co-ordinator, and develop and implement action plans.

Supporting club volunteer co-ordinators will be a regional volunteer co-ordinator supported by the regional committee.

Following the meeting, regional chairman Peter Catton commented: "Most clubs have been working on a volunteer basis since their inception. On the face of it this just imposes another layer of bureaucracy on clubs. Commodores, flag officers, and committee chairmen have been picking their volunteers as they need them. Quite how a volunteer co-ordinator could work alongside club officers is a bit vague. As volunteers



PETER CATTON

themselves, club officers draw other volunteers from the membership as required.

"Having said that, it would no doubt benefit a lot of clubs to take a long hard look at themselves and how their management structure works.

"The regional committee would welcome the comments of clubs so we can look at the whole subject of volunteering at the next meeting and set up a forum to discuss it in more detail if sufficient people are interested," he added.

For further details visit the [rya volunteering website](http://ryavolunteering.org.uk) at ryavolunteering.org.uk



RYA TRAINING DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, VICTORIA SYMMERS DISCUSSES THE VOLUNTEERING SCHEME WITH NWSA REPRESENTATIVE, JOHN RAMUZ

GOVERNMENT IMPOSES DRINK-DRIVE REGULATIONS ON SAILORS

THE Government has introduced drink-drive limits for commercial sailors under the Railways and Transport Safety Act, which sets a limit of 80mg of alcohol in 100ml of blood, the same as for car drivers.

Although the introduction of the new alcohol limit is aimed at professional seamen, such as skippers of fishing boats and dredgers, there is growing fear it will be extended to the thousands of weekend sailors who could face the prospect of being breathalysed from summer 2005 onwards.

Indeed 'professional' yachtsmen, that is those who are paid to sail yachts either as sea school instructors or delivery crews are included in the new legislation. Therefore an instructor will have to remain sober from the moment his pupils arrive on site to the moment they leave – something they are encouraged to follow as part of their qualification as an instructor. It's also the message they pass on to pupils as part of being a responsible skipper.

CRACKDOWN

A crackdown on recreational sailors has been mooted before but, with the Act now in place, it is set to become a reality.

The introduction of the legislation is seen however, as being a sledge hammer to crack a nut. Currently most harbour authori-

ties have byelaws that allow them to apprehend drunken skippers within their area of jurisdiction. So bodies, such as the RYA, the governing body of boating, question the need for this draconian step – it believes that educating skippers (in particular) to be responsible with alcohol is far better.

It also suggests it is wrong to equate boozing at sea with boozing and driving a powerful car – the majority of boats travel around in the four to eight knots speed range, while cars travel at speeds in excess of 70 mph. Reaction times do not have to be the same and nor is there the same density of traffic. So there is a question mark over using the limits set for drink-driving.

QUESTIONS

Also being questioned is how the new law can be policed; the police are known to be concerned that they haven't the resources to carry out the breathalysing. How it can be regulated out on the high seas is also being questioned.

Yachts and small leisure craft which are securely moored will not be subject to the new regulations. So you can have the odd glass of vino with your evening meal – as a responsible skipper, of course, you'll retain your sobriety just in case the boat has to be moved! This a big difference, professional yachtsmen will be subject to the rules whether they are



MAIN TARGET FOR THE NEW DRINK-SAIL REGULATIONS IS LIKELY TO BE HIGH SPEED POWER BOATS

underway or moored up, just as is the case with commercial sailors – not one drop over the limit!

Government ministers are accused of adopting a 'nanny state' approach. David Jamieson, the shipping minister, began a consultation exercise this week to decide whether certain types of private craft, such as rowing boats, should be exempt.

CONSULTATION

The consultation exercise is claimed to take into account the power and size of a boat, as well as its location. The consultation period will last four months and its recommendations are likely to be enacted by summer 2005. Sailors can have their say one way or the other by going onto the DTI website and downloading a copy of the consultation questionnaire.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency has expressed concern that, particularly during the summer months, a small number of individuals are

reported for being drunk in charge of a boat.

The RYA has questioned the value of an alcohol limit and the need to bring in a nationwide breathalyser programme: "The RYA does not condone the excessive consumption of alcohol by the skipper of a boat whilst a vessel is underway but we do not believe it to be an issue that has led to a significant number of incidents.

"Like most activities there are a small minority who behave irresponsibly on the water and further legislation will not stop them.

"However, no evidence has been collected to support the claim that being under the influence of alcohol whilst skippering a recreational boat is a widespread problem.

"As a responsible organisation, with a strong safety ethos, were we to be shown a reliable body of evidence that showed this to be a significant issue, we would support reasonable means to address the problem," says the RYA.

HANDS OFF OUR SWATCHWAYS YACHTSMEN TELL GOVERNMENT

YACHTSMEN'S rights to freely navigate the local waterways are in danger of being eroded. Over 50 sailing club representatives meeting at Tollesbury recently warned the Crown Estates, DTI and developers of the next round of wind farms proposed for the Thames Estuary and the Wash to go away and think again.

With construction of the Gunfleet wind farm delayed a year to 2005, plans have been announced to extend it further eastwards as part of the second round.

A further large wind farm, the London Array, consisting of up to 300 massive 4.5GW tower generators is proposed for the Long Sands, which will shut off two of the main yachting channels through the estuary – Foulger's Gat and Fisherman's Gat.

At the meeting of yachting organisations and clubs at Tollesbury Sailing Club, yachtsmen demanded that their freedom of navigation should not be arbitrarily blocked by these developments.

They received support from Port Of London Authority deputy harbour master Captain Roy Stanbrook, who said that the advantage of maintaining the present yacht routes through the sands kept small craft out of the way of big commercial ships.

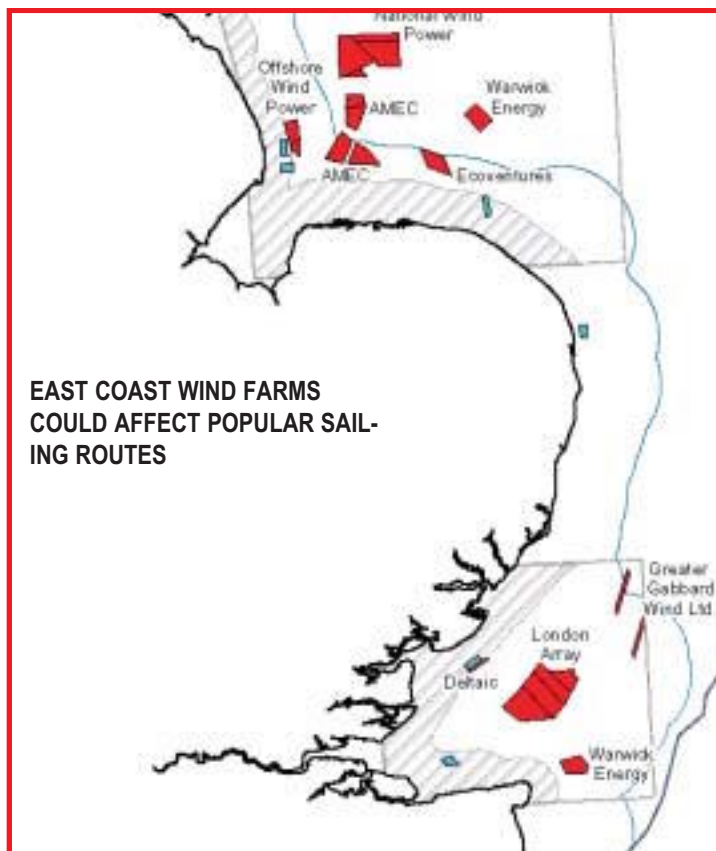
In some cases the proposal would add time to commercial shipping trips as well.

Organiser Chris Edwards, regional environmental co-ordinator, stunned the audience when he said that the civil servants planning the siting of these wind farms weren't using sea charts but Esso road maps! "Part of our problem is educating them. They didn't even know where the shipping channels were."

GIVEN FACT

Commodore of Royal Harwich Yacht Club, Terry Corner commented: "Offshore wind farms are a given fact. There has been no opportunity for debate, the pressures on shore being such that the more relaxed planning regime offshore has become very attractive to developers. As users we are not able to formally comment on proposals, attempts to find out the geographic locations were unsuccessful until the bids had been accepted. It is fortunate that the Port of London Authority has been vocal in protecting its commercial routes to the benefit of the leisure users. In fact the PLA has been championing both commercial and leisure users and should be complemented for their actions."

Most people at the meeting expressed concern at the sheer size and positioning of the London Array, right in the centre of the estuary. While the southern boundary just skirts Fisherman's Gat yachtsmen



were concerned that leisure users navigating just outside the channel, as requested by commercial users, would have too narrow a band to tack in.

PLA SUPPORT

The PLA is seeking to have a large section of the southern end of this development removed to allow yachts to use Fisherman's Gat clear of the marked commercial channel. It was only 18 months ago that this route was buoyed and last year that yachtsmen were asked to keep out of the buoyed channel as it was to become a commercial shipping route with the demise of the adjacent North Edinburgh Channel.

Harwich Area Sailing Association (HASA) representative

Nick Bushill raised the problem of these wind farms affecting radar and VHF transmissions. Problems have been experienced with the first wind farm at Hoyle on Merseyside.

Delegates agreed a study was needed before more masts were constructed. The pylons were metal and would reflect radar and have a tendency to block VHF radio. The blades, which are made of carbon fibre, would presumably have a similar effect.

Delegates also expressed fears that the cables carrying the wind generated electricity from the central collecting station in each wind farm to the shoreside distribution station would not be laid deep enough into the seabed not to be

HANDS OFF

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dredged up by vessels fishing or anchoring. With the strength of tidal flows through the Thames Estuary sand banks, not only do the banks themselves move but also the beds of the channels get frequently scoured. Considerable concern was expressed at the dangers these farms would present to navigators at night and in bad weather. Chris Edwards revealed that the outer corner pylons would be painted yellow up to 12 metres above sea level with yellow flashing lights and have sound signals for use in fog.

“One good thing we’ve achieved in our continuing consultations is that the proposed exclusion zones round the arrays have been dropped,” he said. It would not be illegal to pass through a farm, but woe-betide you if you hit one!

He also revealed that the developers had agreed that the rotor tip clearance would be universally set at 22 metres – at this height 96 per

cent of yachts would get underneath without losing the top of the mast. On the Gunfleet unfortunately, the clearance would be only 20 metres, in which case the percentage of yachts able to go through without being struck by the rotor tips would fall to 88.

While most delegates commented that if we must have wind farms then they were better at sea than on land, the mass of pylons intended for the London Array and Warwick Energy site near the Foreland, would be a new experience.

The Airtricity licence areas on the Galloper and Inner Gabbard, which are of the more traditional linear style and will be seen by few yachtsmen, raised little comment. Some even suggested the large areas of sand banks never crossed by yachts might also be developed and the pylons would break up a bleak vista provided there is sufficient sailing area left.

DROWNING TRAGEDY

TWO well-known East Coast yachtsmen drowned when they fell off a boat in Suffolk Yacht Harbour recently. Capt Victor Sutton (75) of Felixstowe and Max Pennington (73) of Norwich were found dead in the water the morning after they had attended the fitting out supper at Haven Ports Yacht Club

A spokesman for the club said: “This has been a most dreadful tragedy. It has stunned the club and we send our condolences to the families of the two men.”

Capt Sutton served as harbourmaster, general manager and chief executive of the Harwich Haven Authority between 1971 and his retirement in 1992. He was awarded the MBE in 1983 .

Max Pennington only moved to Trowse near Norwich with his wife Janet eight months ago. A very private man he is believed to have three children and two grandchildren.



A lot of worried East Coast sailors; top: pouring over charts of the new wind farms; centre, local stalwart Charlie Stock was furious his beloved swatchways were being blighted; below: Chris Edwards (right) seeks to reassure one troubled sailor.

Speaking at the subsequent Club Forum, RYA environmental specialist Susie Tomson said there was still time to get in objections and comments.

REGION'S SAILORS ARE TOP ECHELON

THE eastern region produces some of the best sailors in Britain. Three such sailors have won top awards in their fields while a number of others, including the Royal Hospital School's Hannah Stodel are going to represent this country at the Olympics in Athens.



Sam Carter (20) above, from Waldringfield SC is the RYA under-21 Youth Coach of the Year. Sam, who started sailing in a Cadet at the club has

been part of the British Sailing Team for the last six years, three of them in Cadets and three in 420s. He's currently at Southampton University.



Alice Whitchurch, (26), above, from Welwyn Garden City came top in the Yachtmaster examinations last year, while Norfolk Broads YC head of sail training **Gilly Foulds**, has been awarded the accolade of Club Coach of the Year.

COMMUNICATION AWARDS OFFER BIGGER PRIZES



THEY'RE back. The RYA's bringing back the Communication Awards.

Overall there are 34 awards up for grabs, rewarding effective communication using both electronic and paper media.

Each of the 13 regions will select two finalists in the newsletter category, who will then go forward for the National Club Newsletter and runner up prizes.

In the website category two regional finalists will go to the national competition.

Judging at regional

level will be by the regional communicator and at national level by a panel of eminent yachting journalists.

Both national and regional awards will be presented to the winners at next year's London Boat Show.

Among the prizes will be cash grants for further communications development. Winners can use the Communications Award logo on the publications and website.

Closing date is September 30th, 2004.



Details and entry forms from Regional Communicator, Garth Cooper; tel: 01362 699195 or email: garthword@btinternet.com .

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