

OUT OF HOURS



TOP SCOUT

ABP's staff training manager, Martin Swale is probably one of the Company's most well known employees. Out of work, one of his greatest pleasures is derived from a very active involvement within Britain's Scouting Movement...

APPOINTED County Commissioner for Norfolk's 10,000 scouts in March this year, Martin has become highly respected at the very top of Britain's Scouting Movement.

"I am very pleased and rather flattered to be asked to become County Commissioner," he said at the time of his appointment.

With extensive experience of Scouting, both in Britain and abroad, Martin actually became involved in Norfolk Scouting in 1978.

"It would be no exaggeration," he says, "to suggest that my initial

involvement as a Leader in Scouting was through the 'strong persuasion' of a senior officer whilst I was in the Army stationed in Malaya. He made it very clear that someone was required to become Leader of the Scout Group for service children, and it took very little imagination to realise the 'someone' was me.

"From then on, I was hooked and was Group Scout Leader with NATO in The Netherlands and for three years was a District Commissioner in Hampshire while based at Marchwood Military Port."

On joining ABP, Martin became actively involved in Norfolk Scouting and was appointed Assistant County Commissioner (Leader Training) in 1983. In this position, he was responsible for all Scout Leader training in Norfolk, which reflected some of his training activities within ABP.

He is currently involved at national level in the promotion of the new Adult Leader Training programme in various parts of the UK, and is a member of the Scout Association's National Leader Training Advisory Board. Recently, he was re-elected to serve the Board for a further three years.

"Part of my involvement with the National Leader Training Advisory Board is in management training. Obviously, many of the courses that I run as staff training manager for ABP can be adapted for training Scouting's managers, and equally, much of the training I am involved with in Scouting can be used in business courses.

"Currently, I am a member of a small working party looking at the training of the Association's Leader Trainers. Our aim is to get our training programmes, both for Scout Leaders and Trainers, recognised by professional bodies such as the Institute of Training and Development as well as City & Guilds. If our training programmes gave people nationally recognised youth leader qualifications, it would give credibility to the Movement and its leaders." As County Commissioner, Martin sees his task to help increase the number of Scouts in Norfolk by providing more imaginative and enjoyable programmes.

"What I think is required is more outdoor activities such as camping. I have no plans to make drastic alterations to operations, but will attempt to expand the Movement in rural areas," he says.

While his position is certainly time-consuming, Martin gets considerable support from his wife, Sheila. She administers the County's Leader Training courses and looks after training registration and many other clerical duties.

Asked why he is happy to devote so much of his own time to the Scout Movement, Martin is quite emphatic in his reply. "Scouting is fun. When I see 600 six-to-eight-year-olds having a tremendous time in the countryside, developing their own personalities physically and spiritually, I don't begrudge one minute of the time that I spend helping to organise such events.

"As a youngster, scouting gave me a great deal, and I get even more enjoyment putting something back."