

Progress update

Nov 2017 to April 2018

Broads Plan 2017

Partnership strategy for
the Norfolk & Suffolk Broads

6-monthly newsletter highlighting action by the Broads Authority and its partners to implement the Broads Plan

Aspiration 1 Improve water capture and efficient water use across the Broadland Rivers Catchment, and develop a longer-term integrated flood risk management strategy for the Broads and interrelated coastal frontage

1.1 Promote and implement best practice water capture and water use measures at a community level, and support a whole farm water management approach across the Broadland Rivers Catchment

- Water Sensitive Farming: New Creyke Wheel Track Combi erosion reduction machinery being trialled on-farm. Level surveys underway for Natural Flood Management project at Camping Beck.
- Broads Local Plan to 2036 (submitted for public examination) contains water efficiency policies that all new, replacement and converted dwellings be designed for daily water demand equivalent to 110L pp and new, replacement and converted buildings for non-residential land uses be designed to score at least 50% in water section of BREEAM assessment.
- Anglian Water Outline Business Plan 2020-2025 and Essex & Suffolk Water's Water Resource Management Plan 2019 are out for public consultation.

1.2 Promote and implement catchment measures to manage water resources and respond to periods of water shortage and scarcity (incl. abstraction controls, water transfer and trading, infrastructure improvements)

- Environment Agency reviewing 43 abstraction licences in Ant Broads and Marshes SSSI. Seminar held in March on process and criteria to assess in-combination impacts of licenced abstractions in Broads in relation to Habitats Directive and SSSI.
- RSPB contractor reviewing existing hydrological data for Catfield Fen and Sutton Fen.

1.3 Maintain current coastal, tidal and fluvial flood risk management strategies relevant to the Broads, Great Yarmouth and interrelated coastal frontage, and prepare a longer-term, integrated, strategic approach

- £750K local levy funding made available over three years for natural flood management projects by Anglian Eastern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee. Six applications submitted within Broadland Rivers Catchment.
- Annual review of Shoreline Management Plan completed and submitted to Defra.
- EA business case submitted for Broadland Futures Initiative community engagement and flood risk management topic study and analysis.
- Findings on PhD research project on flood risk modelling for the Broads being shared through stakeholder engagement.

1.4 Investigate, plan and promote schemes to hold back or divert flood water, moving from retrospective to proactive approaches

- Water Environment Grant scheme funding bids being developed for habitat improvement and invasive species control projects in Upper Bure headwaters and Ant catchment around Catfield and Sutton Fen.

Aspiration 2 Protect, conserve and enhance water quality and land and habitat condition to benefit priority species, recognising natural environmental change and retaining a thriving and sustainable agricultural industry

2.1 Carry out lake restoration, maintenance and enhancement works, incl. bio-manipulation; use monitoring evidence to trial and implement further innovative lake restoration techniques

- 4-year EU CANAPE project launched with 14 partners from five countries developing ideas and practical works to protect peatlands. BA projects include Hickling Broad island recreation and large-scale dredging and deposition. [Also see 2.3]
- Natural England's Hoveton Gt Broad project: Sediment removal phase completed and reed to be planted in Autumn.
- Planned bio-manipulation work at Sotshole Broad on hold.



Photo: CANAPE partners

2.2 Promote and implement measures to reduce point and diffuse pollution into the floodplain and water courses, commensurate with EU/national water and habitat targets and with sustainable farming

- Nine Natural England farmer/stakeholder workshops held in Broadland Rivers Catchment in Winter 2017/18. Around 150 Broadland holdings engaged in best practice techniques to reduce diffuse pollution including: Soil health/biology; tyres, traction & compaction; cultivation/drilling techniques; and pesticide handling and bio beds.

2.3 Maintain and enhance existing areas of priority fen, reed bed, grazing marsh and wet woodland through site management agreements/prescriptions and support services to site managers

- New standard for reed quality being tested with National Society of Master Thatchers and will be applied throughout Northern Europe. Two new Broads Reed and Sedge Cutters Association members offered training support through Prince's Countryside Fund grant.
- Catfield Fen: Scrub clearance completed and eco-hydrology report commissioned.
- Ranworth: Sluice now operational, allowing water flow between River Bure and marsh dyke system.
- Carlton Marshes: Project underway for wild compost creation from soft-track harvested reed.
- Sutton Fen: RSPB completed work to collate all historic species records on site. Species list now 4200 including 450 Nationally Scarce or Rare and 150 RDB species. RSPB finalising Sutton Fen Management Plan 2018-23, aimed at site maintenance following 10 years of restoration.
- Water, Mills and Marshes: RSPB recruiting Broads Land Management project manager and developing contacts and land ownership mapping. Restoration underway at Chedgrave Common. NWT surveying water voles on Upton grazing marshes and trialling fen harvester cut on reed bed to benefit marsh harrier and crane nesting.
- CANAPE: Fen and reed bed projects include best practice commercial and conservation reed management, raising awareness of peatlands, and developing an adaptation approach to paludiculture in the Broads. [also see 2.1, 3.2]

2.4 Define, implement and monitor management regimes for priority species and invasive non-native species

- RSPB Little Tern protection project underway, focusing on Eccles and Winterton.
- British Dragonfly Society's first Conservation Outreach Officer appointed to raise its profile, including setting up 'Dragonfly Hotspots'. BDS running special surveys including Willow Emerald Watch and Dragonfly Challenge.
- Norfolk Flora Group completed draft 'Norfolk Species of Conservation Concern', which provides the Norfolk context for S41 (formally Biodiversity Action Plan priority) species. Research shows first recorded evidence in the Broads of water-plantain *Baldellia ranunculoides* ssp. *Repens*.
- Abrehart Ecology surveying marshes for little whirlpool ramshorn snail and potential receptor sites. 2000 snails translocated from Castle Marshes to Beccles and Shipmeadow in Nov 2017.
- Bat Conservation Trust project ringing *Nathusius pipistrelles* to determine numbers and migration patterns.

2.5 Create 'bigger, better and more joined up' areas of priority habitat by identifying opportunities and developing site-specific plans for new habitat areas, connections, buffer zones and pollinator networks

- NWT has taken on ownership and management of Pigney's Wood (23.5ha site near North Walsham) and 16ha of wet grazing marsh at South Walsham, building on the Upton Marshes reserve.

- SWT Carlton Marshes funding award - see 9.3
- National Nature Reserves Partnership has agreed a Joint Strategy. A NNR rebranding exercise will be part of new interpretation work at How Hill.

2.6 Improve partnership coordination and communication of Broads biodiversity monitoring and research efforts, linked to national biodiversity network

- 2-day Fen Research workshop held in June to agree research priorities and partnership action, led by Broads Biodiversity Partnership. <http://bit.ly/2xyjVvM>
- Scientific paper on 'Response of submerged macrophyte communities to external and internal restoration measures in temperate shallow lakes' submitted to *Front Plant Sci.* (Sept '17).
- NERC Hydroscape project work ongoing: www.hydroscapeblog.wordpress.com/about
- Evidence submitted for peatland habitat management research (Cambridge U.) to feed into www.conservationevidence.com.



Photo: Water vole

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Aspiration 3 Apply a catchment-scale approach to reduce sediment input and the sediment backlog, and sustainably reuse or dispose of dredged material

3.1 Implement dredging regimes in accordance with defined waterways specifications, and seek resources/legislation to accelerate the removal of sediment in the Broads system

- To end February the BA removed 51,890m³ of dredged sediment from prioritised sites (98% of programmed annual target). Full dredging reports at www.broads-authority.gov.uk/broads-authority/committees/navigation-committee.

3.2 Implement plans and good practice guidance to reduce soil erosion into the waterways, manage areas lost or vulnerable to erosion, and dispose of dredged material in sustainable and beneficial ways

- Water Sensitive Farming projects: Six silt traps installed on Blackwater tributary of River Wensum. Norfolk Rivers IDB designed and delivered schemes with local contractor.

- Association of Inland Navigation Authorities submitting guidance document on disposal/reuse of wet dredgings to Environment Agency for finalisation and approval.
- CANAPE project – see 2.1

Aspiration 4 Maintain a safe, open navigation and reduce pressures on busy or vulnerable areas

4.1 Maintain existing navigation water space and develop appropriate opportunities to expand or extend access for various types of craft

- Hydrographic survey of River Waveney upstream of Geldeston carried out to assess feasibility of extending small craft access.

4.2 Carry out appropriate aquatic plant cutting and tree and scrub management programmes and seek resources to increase operational targets

- Approximately 2000m of riverside tree management completed by BA in Autumn/Winter 2017/18. Prioritisation programme for 2018/19 works underway and will include use of new hydraulic tree shears. Weed harvesters in water ready for this season's aquatic plant cutting.
- Stonewort cutting trials at Hickling Broad monitored and interim report produced.
- Fen maintenance works carried out on BA land at Buttle Marsh and small contract works scheduled at NWT sites at Hickling NNR and Upton Fen.

4.3 Implement, promote and monitor measures to maintain and improve safety and security for the navigation and boats

- Under Port Marine Safety Code, BA carries out risk assessments of all boating activities and marine operations on its waters to ensure risks are managed to be 'as low as reasonably practicable'. Formal Safety Assessment (FSA) identified powerboat racing on Oulton Broad as priority for more detailed consideration.

Aspiration 5 Improve understanding, protection, conservation and enhancement of the Broads landscape character and distinctive built, cultural, archaeological and geological assets

5.1 Implement measures to protect, conserve and enhance the distinctive landscape character and historic assets of the Broads

- Heritage Skills Training Supervisor appointed under Water, Mills and Marshes scheme. Funding received to laser scan 8 Broads' mills at risk, bringing total scanned to 20. Strumpshaw steam engine house works granted planning permission.

5.2 Produce, update and promote local landscape conservation action plans, appraisals and enhancement schemes

- WMM Landscape Conservation Action Plan published: <http://watermillsandmarshes.org.uk/wmmdetail/landscape-conservation-action-plan/>
- Somerton Conservation Area Appraisal consultation completed and area taken forward for adoption by summer 2018. Initial CAAs undertaken for Loddon and Horning.

5.3 Develop measures to investigate, record and protect local built and cultural features, archaeology and potential hidden heritage (incl. waterlogged assets, waterways history, settlement patterns, WWII remains)

- Acle Community Archive Group working with WMM project officers to create trail around local Second World War heritage sites. Route mapping underway and volunteer team recruited.
- BA service level agreement set up with Norfolk County Council for archaeological services.
- Laser scanning of mills - see 5.1



Photo: Wartime planning in the Broads

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5.4 Implement and promote measures to conserve and enhance local geodiversity sites and assets across identified work areas in Norfolk Geodiversity Action Plan

- NGP working with NBIS to plot County Geodiversity Sites (CGS) and Candidate CGS in Norfolk, including the Broads, onto their MapInfo GIS system.
- New Interpretation from NGP includes contributions on eight geodiversity sites in the Broads to the South Yare Wildlife Group State of the Environment Report, 2017; Evolution of the geological landscape to the Broads Landscape Character Assessment update (2017); The Norwich Crag Formation and the Ludham Borehole.

5.5 Expand the longer-term resource of land management and heritage construction and maintenance skills training and qualifications

- Heritage skills training programme underway as part of Water, Mills and Marshes scheme. Historic Environment Manager held induction talks at Norwich City College in April.

5.6 Build on measures to reduce the impacts on the Broads of visual intrusion and noise and light pollution, and pursue potential for dark sky place status

- BA progressing schemes with UK Power Networks and National Undergrounding Wires Steering Group:
- Cantley, 2.5km, £247,000. Consent granted awaiting landowner permissions.
- Ludham Marshes, 1.1km, £172,000. Consent granted awaiting landowner permissions.
- South Walsham Marshes, 2.4km, £750,000. Stage 1 approval, currently getting landowner in principal support, going for stage 2 application in June.

- Potter Heigham, North and South Banks of river, 2.8km, £420,000 stage 2 permission granted UK Power Networks starting work this year

Aspiration 6 Provide opportunities for distinctive recreational experiences in harmony with the special qualities of the area

6.1 Develop and implement schemes to upgrade and improve the network of access points and routes (where adverse effects can be prevented), linked to visitor facilities and including easier access for people with mobility and sensory needs

- Norfolk Access Improvement Plan out to public consultation. The draft plan offers multiple partnership opportunities for integrated access.
- Horstead Mill canoe launch on site works underway.
- Date of August 2018 agreed for newly installed culvery at Pye's Mill, Loddon. This will enable Loddon FP29 to be opened again following collapse of timber footbridge.

6.2 Implement measures to improve the network provision of riverside facilities, incl. refuse and recycling services, electric power points, water and pump out

- BA prepared design brief for the development of its new site at Acle Bridge and is running an architectural design competition in Summer 2018.



Photo: Acle Bridge site purchased by the BA

6.3 Maintain, develop and promote a coordinated and year-round programme of activities (taking measures to prevent any adverse environmental impacts)

- Water, Mills and Marshes 'Gateway to the Broads' project developing plans with Greater Anglia and Norwich University of the Arts for maps and interpretation installations at Gt Yarmouth Rail Station.

6.4 Implement Broads Angling Strategy action plan through partnership working and securing of additional resources

- Broads Angling Services Group CIC incorporated Dec 2017 to replace Broads Angling Strategy Group.
- CIC and refreshed Broads Angling Strategy to be launched at Norwich Forum on 20 May 2018.
- 1,500 hours volunteer time supported Northern Broads fish tagging project (Environment Agency/Bournemouth University).
- 18,000 rod licence holders surveyed on future of Broads fishery and other issues.

Aspiration 7 Strengthen and promote key messages and tourism offer in keeping with the area's status, special qualities, history and traditions

7.1 Develop integrated, multimedia communications to boost local community and visitor awareness and appreciation of the special qualities of the Broads National Park

- Broads National Park display installed at Norwich Airport and brand signage being developed for railway stations and on village identification signs.
- Local media reporting (Aug'17-Mar '18) shows 83 recorded stories (86% positive or neutral) on the BA's work in the Broads. Broads National Park social media accounts show 17% and 36% increases in Twitter and Facebook followers and more than 500% increase in Facebook post views.
- www.watermillsandmarshes.org.uk website launched. Multiple projects underway including solar/WiFi-based interpretations for installations at remote sites.

7.2 Maintain and upgrade the range and provision of multimedia and 'point of need' visitor information and interpretation

- BA Information Centres open for season. Broadcaster, Broadsheet, and Visit the Broads info published including Outdoors Festival brochure. Visit the Broads and Whitlingham Country Park websites upgraded.
- New branding installations - see 7.1
- Water, Mills and Marshes: Projected Augmented Sand Box commissioned to teach geographic, geologic and hydrologic concepts such as reading topography maps and the meaning of contour lines, watersheds and catchment areas.

7.3 Implement industry-based measures to strengthen the quality and distinctiveness of the Broads tourism offer, including careers and skills training

- Broads Tourism delivered two training courses: 'Welcome Afloat', tailored towards improving the knowledge and understanding of tourism staff. They are also developing information fact sheets to be used by their members as training aids for seasonal staff to improve their knowledge and understanding of the Broads to pass on information to visitors.
- Broads Tourism developing green credentials self-assessment scheme for their members, with criteria aimed at encouraging improvements in quality and sustainability.



Photo: School pupils on a 'Broads experience' trip



Photo: Norwich Airport installation

© James Bass

Aspiration 8 Support development growth within and adjacent to the Broads, while avoiding adverse impacts on the area's special qualities

8.1 Update and adopt Broads spatial planning policies and site specific allocations to support local business, housing need, community facilities and transport choices, and to ensure development occurs within environmental limits

- Broads Local Plan submitted for Examination in Public and BA awaiting hearing schedule from Planning Inspector.
- More than £11 million of new funding invested in latest tranche of Better Broadband for Norfolk. Target to bring high-speed broadband to more than 95% of Norfolk premises by Spring 2020 although no plans in some parts of the Broads: www.betterbroadbandnorfolk.co.uk/can-i-get-fast-broadband

8.2 Develop comprehensive approach to enhancing sites that are strategically important for their heritage or green infrastructure value

- BA scoping options for ongoing management of Hoveton Riverside Park, including deteriorating infrastructure.

Aspiration 9 Strengthen connections between a wide audience, particularly local communities and young people, and the Broads environment

9.1 Widen the range of active and entry level/ taster initiatives that promote physical and mental health and wellbeing, based in the Broads natural environment

- Water, Mills and Marshes 'Try it out' activities planned at range of events including Science Festival and Great Yarmouth Maritime Festival, building on last year's successes.

9.2 Offer a flexible range of practical volunteering programmes, events and training, and establish a longer-term succession strategy

- Modular BA volunteer training programme being rolled out and new volunteer handbook issued. 21 new volunteers recruited and trained for BA tasks and Water, Mills and Marshes Wild Watch project.

9.3 Increase the scope for partnership fundraising and other income generation initiatives to support Broads-themed projects

- Suffolk Wildlife Trust awarded £4m by Heritage Lottery Fund to complete purchase of 348 acres surrounding its Carlton Marshes nature reserve, creating a 1,000-acre landscape-scale site of mixed wetland habitat.
- Partnership funding bid in preparation through Broads Trust to develop educational materials on wherries.
- Discussions ongoing on helping smaller trusts in the Broads raise their capacity and impact.
- BA developing corporate approach to external funding.



Photo: Carlton Marshes

9.4 Improve the capacity of the Broads Environmental Education Network (BEEN) to develop and run educational programmes and events for local schoolchildren

- Broads curriculum website under construction and introductory resources being developed. Video production schedule agreed.
- Water, Mills and Marshes: Roadshows delivered into 12 primary schools in Lowestoft, reaching 620 pupils and 36 school teaching staff. Primary students embarking on Experience Trips, a 1.5 hour boat trip from Oulton Broad to Oulton Dyke and River Waveney, then to SWT Carlton Marshes for wildlife and nature identification exercises.

9.5 Develop and run motivational outreach activities and award schemes for young people, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, focusing on life and work skills training and practical experience

- BA Youth Ranger programme underway.
- Two terms of Engage Trust programme delivered, John Muir Award programmes submitted and Country Trust schools programme scheduled.
- Bid submitted for Schools Sculpture Trail project at Whitlingham Country Park to run over the summer term.

Aspiration 10 Build the awareness and adaptive capacity of local communities to the challenges of climate change and sea level rise

10.1 Develop and promote tailored 'climate-smart' mitigation and adaptation measures, guidance and support to local communities

- Anglian Eastern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) running engagement event on 16 May to showcase flood risk management best practice, e.g. Lowestoft Temporary Flood Barriers, Where does the Water Go, Broadland Futures Initiative (BFI), Property Level Resilience/ Protection, Our Water.
- Broadland Futures Initiative presenting information on flood risk management and climate change issues for the Broads at community events including UEA Green Film Festival and talks to local groups.

10.2 Commission and coordinate research to inform management approaches to decrease carbon emissions and increase carbon sequestration in the Broads

- Two academic bids submitted for research council funding for land and water management research including peatland management and carbon sequestration; outcomes awaited.

More information on key projects

Broads Catchment Partnership:

www.broads-authority.gov.uk/looking-after/managing-land-and-water/beyond-the-broads

CANAPE: www.northsearegion.eu/canape

SWT Land Purchase campaign:

www.suffolkbroads.org.uk/about-the-campaign

Water, Mills and Marshes: www.watermillsandmarshes.org.uk



Photo: Launch of Broads Outdoors Festival brochure 2018



Website: www.broads-authority.gov.uk/broads-authority/how-we-work/strategy

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