

## **Broads Integrated Access Strategy and Action Plan**

Report by Senior Waterways and Recreation Officer

**Summary:** This report provides members with details of the draft Broads Integrated Access Strategy and Action Plan.

**Recommendation:** That members endorse the draft strategy and action plan subject to officers taking account of additional consultation responses particularly with regard to angling access.

### **1 Background**

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the Broads Authority identified the need to move towards the development of a more integrated approach to access management in the Broads in the Broads Plan 2011. The long term aim for tourism recreation and access set out in the Broads Plan is that:

*“The Broads offers a wide range of high quality land and water based activities in suitable locations and in harmony with the special qualities of the area and its communities. The value of the Broads as a place for escape, adventure, enjoyment, inspiration and recreation is recognised and valued. Tourism is managed at environmentally and socially sustainable levels, contributing to a thriving local economy and meeting the standards of the Green Tourism Business scheme.*

*Access on land and between land and water is sensitively managed to maximise the social, educational and health benefits of open space to all, while ensuring the resource itself is not degraded. Where possible, improvements are made to the connectivity and use of access routes, linked to visitor destination points and sustainable transport.”*

- 1.2 The key delivery mechanism for this integrated approach to access management was identified as being the development of an integrated access strategy which would better identify, integrate and develop access routes, links and destination points with a range of supporting visitor information and interpretation. The Broads Plan further identified that the strategy should place emphasis on sustainable travel choices, develop links with public transport and develop opportunities for walking, cycling and non powered boating.
- 1.3 Officers have therefore been working on the development of an Integrated Access Strategy which was identified by the Authority as a corporate priority for completion by 2013.

## **2 Scoping and Consultation**

- 2.1 Consultation on the development of the strategy has taken place with a wide range of user groups and bodies. The Broads Authority has previously received presentations on the development of the strategy and agreed the general principles and approach that officers have adopted. Consultation has also taken place with the Broads Local Access Forum (BLAF) which advises the Authority and other organisations on improving public access and open air recreation and enjoyment of the area. The BLAF advised officers on the scope of the strategy, its objectives, guiding principles and content of the initial strategy Action Plan. The BLAF also considered a report on the proposed text of the strategy and its draft action plan at its meeting on 6 March 2013 and fully supported the draft strategy document.
- 2.2 Reports on the content of the strategy have been taken to the Broads Forum and the Broads Authority's Navigation Committee both of whom supported the approach that officers have taken. The Navigation Committee also supported the mooring element of the strategy action plan which has identified priority sites for mooring development.
- 2.3 In addition to consulting the Authority's committees, officers have discussed the scope and content of the strategy and made presentations to the Norfolk and Suffolk Boating Association, Broads Hire Boat Federation, Broads Society, Broads Biodiversity Forum, Anglian Regional Paddlesports Group, Canoe England and the Broads Angling Strategy Group (BASG). Internal discussions have also taken place with a range of Broads Authority officers.
- 2.4 The draft strategy document and action plan has also been sent for consultation purposes to a range of partner organisations, user groups and Parish Councils with a view to encouraging the development of community groups and partnerships to aid in the development of the action plan. Members will note that the strategy document actively encourages partner organisations, stakeholders, user groups, parish councils and community groups to come forward with project proposals for discussion. The Authority is also committed to undertake further consultation on the development of project proposals with potential partners in order to maximise the outcomes delivered by individual projects.

## **2 Draft Integrated Access Strategy**

- 2.1 In producing the draft strategy and action plan officers have taken account of comments made in the consultations carried out to date. The initial action plan covers the period 2013-2015 with priorities identified for the first year of the action plan period.
- 2.2 Aside from the comments made in the consultation process to date the draft action plan has also been informed by a review of the Broads Rights of Way Improvement Plan and reviews of the Broads Authority's Mooring Strategy and Small Boat Slipway Strategy. Officers will also take account of any

additional consultation responses and are currently waiting for the BASG to advise on angling access priorities, particularly with regard to slipway provision.

### **3 Funding**

- 3.1 It is important to recognise that, with reduced resources following the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review, the Broads Authority is not in a position to lead on the delivery of all the potential access improvements identified in this document. Cuts in public sector budgets across the board mean that effective collaboration and partnership working between agencies and local communities will be essential if projects are to be realised. This approach is in accordance with advice given in the Government's Vision and Circular 2010 on English National Parks and the Broads which emphasises the need for partnership working to achieve strategic objectives, maximise benefits and minimise costs. A key factor in determining which projects the Authority is able to support or facilitate will therefore be whether there is community support and involvement in projects and scope for passing on or sharing maintenance liability for schemes with partner organisations, community groups, parish councils or local businesses. Officers consider that the adoption of the integrated approach to access management advocated in the document also gives the potential for drawing down funding from a wide range of sources to deliver real benefits for users of the Broads.

### **4 Conclusions**

- 4.1 The strategy aims to provide leadership and guidance on the principles that all those working towards improving access provision in the Broads should take into consideration when developing access projects. The strategy also aims to influence the local and regional policy agenda by ensuring that the benefits of recreation in the Broads are recognised in the local and regional policy framework and given adequate weight in the planning process.
- 4.2 Aside from the key objectives of the strategy the Broads Authority will use a number of additional guiding principles for project prioritisation which are set out in the document. Provided that it can be demonstrated that project proposals deliver the overarching objectives of the strategy the Broads Authority will use these to assess which access projects it is able to support and promote.
- 4.3 The strategy provides a broad framework for the development of recreational access in the Broads. The Broads Authority will play a key role in the delivery of the aims of the strategy; in part by direct delivery of projects on the ground but also by supporting and encouraging the initiatives of partners and providing guidance to community groups and local businesses. The strategy and its action plan should be seen as a living document which will evolve to take account of changing priorities, circumstances, ongoing consultation on project development and opportunities over time.

4.4 By adopting this approach to access management officers hope to demonstrate that access can be successfully integrated with conservation, land management, economic development and health initiatives. Closer working with partner organisations and community groups may also lead to more joined up public sector working and consequently better access provision in the Broads. Members are invited to endorse the draft of the strategy text and the action plan attached as Appendix 1 to this report subject to officers taking account of any additional consultation responses, particularly with regard to angling access.

Background papers: Nil

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Broads Plan Objectives: TR1, TR2, TR3

Appendices: APPENDIX 1 - Draft Integrated Access Strategy and Action Plan

### Broads Authority Integrated Access Strategy Action Plan 2013-2015

| Ref            | Location                                   | Proposed Access Enhancement  | Key Organisations                          | Target Timescale | Progress |
|----------------|--|--|--|------------------|----------|
| <b>General</b> |  |  |  |                  |          |
| G1             | Broads                                     | Complete GIS access mapping and gap analysis   | BA   | June 2013        |          |
| G2             | Broads                                     | Develop access project database  | BA   | May 2013         |          |
| G3             | Broads                                     | Complete consultation on slipway and angling access  | BA/EA/BASG                                 | June 2013        |          |
| G4             | Broads                                     | Develop and publish canoe trails information   | BA/BCU/Anglian Regional Paddlesports Group | 2014             |          |
| G5             | Broads                                     | Provide online access to IAS Mapping   | BA   | 2015             |          |
| G6             | Broads                                     | Carry out audit of land registered as open access land under CROW 2000 to assess whether access improvements are desirable | BA   | 2015             |          |
| <b>Waveney</b> |  |  |  |                  |          |
| W1             | River Waveney Worlingham to Burgh St Peter | Investigate feasibility of new 24-hour moorings to fill gap identified in Mooring Strategy                                 | BA/Landowners                              | 2013             |          |
| W2             | Herringfleet TM 4698 - 4697                | Formalise link from Herringfleet 24hr moorings to Herringfleet Smock Mill  | BA /Landowner                              | Sept 2013        |          |
| W3             | River Waveney Geldeston to Ellingham       | Formalise canoe access and launching facilities to river   | BA/EA/Landowners                           | Sept 2013        |          |

|                      |   |  |                                  |      |  |  |
|----------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|------|--|--|
|                      |   | below Ellingham sluice   |                                  |      |  |  |
| W4                   | Shipmeadow / Barsham<br>TM 3990                 | New permissive footpath<br>from 24hr mooring to<br>Barsham Hall and back on<br>Angles Way                                      | BA /<br>SCC/Landowne<br>rs       | 2014 |  |  |
| W5                   | Herringfleet –<br>Somerleyton TM 4697 -<br>4797 | Seek permissive link across<br>the marshes to create a<br>circular route from<br>Herringfleet 24hr moorings<br>to Somerleyton. | BA/Landowners/<br>Parish Council | 2014 |  |  |
| W6                   | Belton TG 4601 - TG<br>4702                     | Work with partners to<br>develop the use of the<br>disused rail line to create a<br>circular route across Belton<br>Marshes    | BA /<br>NCC/Landowne<br>rs       | 2015 |  |  |
| W7                   | Yarmouth Railway<br>Station to Burgh Castle     | Realign route of Angles way<br>and waymark to increase<br>access for all opportunities.<br>Signage and furniture               | BA/NCC                           | 2015 |  |  |
| W8                   | River Waveney Beccles<br>to Burgh St Peter      | Investigate feasibility of new<br>slipway access   | BA/Landowners                    | 2015 |  |  |
| W9                   | Oulton Broad/Burgh St<br>Peter                  | Investigate feasibility of<br>providing cycle access to<br>Burgh St Peter Ferry from<br>Oulton Broad                           | BA/SCC/Lando<br>wners/           | 2015 |  |  |
| <b>Yare and Chet</b> |   |  |                                  |      |  |  |
| Y1                   | River Yare Langley to<br>Reedham                | Investigate feasibility of new<br>24-hour moorings to fill gap<br>identified in mooring strategy                               | BA/Landowners                    | 2013 |  |  |
| Y2                   | River Yare Whitlingham<br>to Rockland           | Investigate feasibility of new<br>slipway/canoe launching<br>facilities  | BA/Landowners                    | 2013 |  |  |

|             |  |   |  |      |  |  |
|-------------|--|---|--|------|--|--|
| Y3          | River Wensum Norwich                       | Investigate potential for improved small boat access to the river corridor through Norwich  | BA/ Norwich CC/Wensum River Parkway/Landowners | 2013 |  |  |
| Y4          | Postwick TG 2906 - 3007                    | Seek to establish permissive link across Postwick marshes from end of existing footpath opposite woods end to footpath opposite Surlingham Ferry. | BA/EA/Landowners                               | 2014 |  |  |
| Y5          | Halvergate / Berney Marshes TG 4306 - 4707 | Upgrade signage and furniture to Weavers Way to re-establish good quality bridleway circuit. Requires furniture enhancement and signage           | BA/NCC/Landowners                              | 2015 |  |  |
| Y6          | River Yare Whitlingham to Bramerton        | Investigate feasibility of new 24hour mooring to fill gap identified in mooring strategy  | BA/Landowners                                  | 2015 |  |  |
| Y7          | Brundall TG 3108                           | Link Brundall Garden Station to Brundall 24hr moorings via new footpath across Brundall Gardens   | BA/Landowners                                  | 2015 |  |  |
| <b>Bure</b> |  |   |  |      |  |  |
| B1          | River Bure Stracey Arms to Gt. Yarmouth    | Investigate feasibility of new 24-hour moorings/safety moorings to fill gap identified in Mooring Strategy  | BA/Landowners                                  | 2013 |  |  |
| B2          | Wroxham                                    | Improve existing slipway at Wroxham Broad including angling access  | BA/EA/Landowners                               | 2013 |  |  |

|                       |   |  |  |                   |  |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|-------------------|--|
|                       |   | enhancements   |  |                   |  |
| B4                    | Hoveton - Ludham                                | Investigate feasibility of elements of 3 Rivers Way scheme that link to Ludham Bridge  | BA/NCC/3RW/Landowners                    | 2013              |  |
| B3                    | Wroxham   | Investigate feasibility of additional slipway access in area   | BA/Landowners                            | 2015              |  |
| <b>Ant and Thurne</b> |   |  |  |                   |  |
| AT1                   | Ludham Bridge<br>TG 373171 - 380158             | Link Ludham Bridge to existing permissive path network and St Benet's Abbey  | BA /<br>NCC/Landowner/Parish<br>Councils | September<br>2013 |  |
| AT2                   | Horning marsh TG 3617 -<br>3717                 | Seek access opportunities around access land at Horning Marsh. Link with Ludham Bridge 24hr moorings. Establish permissive path and sign | BA/NCC/Landowners                        | September<br>2013 |  |
| AT3                   | How Hill  | Seek access opportunities linking How Hill moorings to Irstead Holmes:   | BA/Landowners/<br>Catfield PC            | 2013              |  |
| AT4                   | Horsey TG 4521-4522                             | Establish permissive off road path to allow for safe circuit around horsey. Will create 2 circular walks                                 | BA/Landowners                            | 2014              |  |
| AT5                   | Catfield - Potter Heigham<br>TG 413208 - 412213 | Seek to establish permissive path from Decoy Road to Swim Coots drainage mill along flood bank to view point                             | BA/NWT/Landowners                        | 2015              |  |
| AT6                   | Potter Heigham                                  | Seek to link Highs Mill to   | BA/EA/Landown                            | 2015              |  |

|     |                    |  |                               |      |  |  |
|-----|--------------------|--|-------------------------------|------|--|--|
|     | TG 426193 - 430190 | Middle Wall (Potter Heigham)   | ers                           |      |  |  |
| AT7 | Barton TG 3523     | Seek access opportunities to link Barton Turf 24hr moorings with Barton Fen and Moy's Mill | BA / NCC/Landowners/Barton PC | 2015 |  |  |

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