

Broads Authority

Broads Local Access Forum

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2015

Present:

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| Dr Keith Bacon | Mr Alec Hartley |
| Mr Olly Barnes | Mrs Lana Hemsall |
| Mrs Liz Brooks | Dr Peter Mason |
| Mr Tony Brown | Mr Stephen Read |
| Mr Robin Buxton | Mr George Saunders |
| Mr Nick Dennis | Mr Charles Swan |
| Mr Mike Flett | Mr Ray Walpole |
| Mr Tony Gibbons | Mr Peter Warner |

In Attendance

Professor Jacquie Burgess – Chairman of the Broads Authority
Mr Adrian Clarke – Senior Waterways and Recreation Officer
Ms Maria Conti – Broads Strategy and Projects Officer
Mr Mark King - Waterways and Recreation Officer
Ms Andrea Long – Director of Planning and Resources

2/1 To receive apologies for absence and welcome new and returning members

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Louis Baugh, Mr Martin Symons, Mrs Dawn Hatton, Mr Richard Webb and Mr Chris Yardley.

The Director of Planning and Resources welcomed both new and returning members to the meeting and explained the purpose of the Broads Local Access Forum and specifically how today's workshop session related to the Integrated Access Strategy and the Broads Plan. The members then introduced themselves to the Forum.

2/2 Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Following introductions the Director of Planning and Resources asked for nominations for Chairman. Dr Keith Bacon was nominated by Charles Swan and this was seconded by Mr Mike Flett. There being no other nominees Dr Bacon was duly elected as Chairman to the Broads Local Access Forum and took over Chairing of the meeting. Nominations were then requested for Vice-Chairman. Mr Alec Hartley was nominated by Ray Walpole and this was seconded by Stephen Read. There being no other nominations Mr Hartley was duly elected as Vice-Chairman of the Broad Local Access Forum

2/3 To receive and confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 September were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2/4 To receive any points of information arising from the minutes

(1) Minute 1/4 (3) Ludham Footpath

The Senior Waterways and Recreation Officer (SWRO) advised that work to clear the adjacent ditch and develop the ramp onto the riverbank was due to start on either 11 December 2015 or 14 December 2015. Tony Gibbons asked if the overgrown permissive path leading east from St Benet's Abbey could be reinstated following the development of the footpath from Ludham Bridge. SWRO advised that this could be added as a project idea to the 'wish list' the Forum would be discussing in the workshop.

(2) Minute 1/4 (4) How Hill Footpath

The SWRO advised that the works to the footpath were ready to go but formal approval for the scheme was still awaited from Natural England as the relevant Habitats Regulations Assessment had been received.

(3) Minutes 1/6 Parish Council Issues – Herringfleet Car Park

The SWRO and Mr Charles Swan had recently visited the Herringfleet Car Park site. Following this visit Natural England had reviewed the site themselves and advised that the pigs needed to be removed from the site by the end of November as they are in breach of an existing Higher Level Stewardship agreement. The SWRO advised that the landowner has now removed the pigs from the site. The SWRO also advised that a second site visit would be necessary to review the outstanding issues regarding whether gates were now open to allow public access and if the overhanging tree had been cut back.

(4) Minute 1/7 Membership

Peter Warner asked for clarification of the recruitment process for membership to the Broads Local Access Forum. SWRO advised that the regulations governing the composition of local access forums stated that forums should have at least 16 and a maximum of 22 members, and that these should be people who appear to be representative of:

- users of local rights of way or open access land (e.g. walkers, horse riders, cyclists and carriage drivers);
- owners and occupiers of access land or land over which local rights of way subsist; and
- any other interests especially relevant to the appointing authority's area.

The SWRO went on to explain that interest groups had to be asked to appoint only one prospective member to ensure as many groups as possible were

represented. The total number of members on the Broads Local Access Forum now stands at 21 but there is no legal obligation to fill the remaining vacancy.

(5) **Minute 1/11 Broads Forum Update**

With work at Hickling Broad now in progress, BLAF members again highlighted the opportunity for new access routes to view the Broad. The SWRO advised that new routes had been discussed at the recent Parish Forum and as a result he was to attend a site visit with local residents to look at the available options.

2/5 Norfolk County Council

The Director of Planning and Resources along with the Waterways and Recreation Officer (WRO) had met with Andy Hutchinson and Russell Wilson of the Norfolk Trails Team on 7 December 2015.

- (1) Following a budget review, the Norfolk Trails department will have to reduce their budget by £200,000 by 2018 which will impact on staff and project delivery.
- (2) The Landscape Partnership Scheme was discussed with the Project Manager. A major part of the project is to open access into the Broads from the three main 'hubs' (Nicholas Everitt Park in Lowestoft, Whitlingham Country Park in Norwich and Bure Park in Great Yarmouth). A number of projects are being planned with work hoped to start in 2018. These include the enhancement of Great Yarmouth train station to highlight that both the Wherryman's and Weaver's Way can be easily accessed just a few minutes' walk from the station.
- (3) Norfolk Trails are organising a joint LAF meeting in the New Year with Local Access Forum's from Norfolk, Suffolk and the Broads represented.
- (4) The Wherryman's Way was discussed at length:

Currently the route is diverted away from the River Chet due to health and safety issues with the collapse of a wooden bridge and the unstable nature of the bank the path follows.

Due to the high number of complaints regarding the diversion of the route a joint statement from Norfolk County Council (NCC), the Environment Agency and the Broads Authority would be helpful to keep users informed.

The Environment Agency has been approached to supply some detailed information to enable NCC to gauge the suitability of the bank as a walking route in the future. Natural England has also been contacted regarding the future ecological status of Hardley Flood.

All parties were in agreement that any works must be 'future proofed' to ensure they are not just a temporary fix.

Norfolk Trails are proposing a meeting with local residents and interest groups in January 2016.

2/6 Integrated Access Strategy Access Plan review

The SWRO advised new BLAF members of the aims and objectives of the Integrated Access Strategy Action Plan.

To help prioritisation of these aims and objectives, members were asked to form groups and refer to the mapped sections of the Broads on their tables. Members were asked to identify access issues so these could be reviewed and added to the Action Plan for development into future projects.

It was also noted that prioritisation work on the IAS Action Plan carried out by BLAF members in the workshop activity would also be important material to feed into the Broads Plan review process.

Comments received during the workshop activity will be collated and outcomes reported to members at the next Broads Local Access Forum meeting in June 2016.

Prior to the workshop activity the following items were discussed:

Broadland Way

The SWRO advised that Broadland Way is a strategic trail that will link Norwich, the Yare Valley and Bure Valley Park and follow on through the 3 Rivers Way. The reason for the delivery of this project is the large contribution developers have to pay in relation to Green Infrastructure through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Cycling

- (1) Mr Mike Flett met with Peter Howe regarding the Three Rivers Way. The project is progressing well with work on Phase 1 (Hoveton to Horning) due to start January 2016 with a completion date of July 2016. Phase 2 is proposed to run from Hoveton to Ludham Bridge. Phase 3 is proposed to run from Ludham Bridge to Potter Heigham. Feasibility studies for phase 2 and 3 have now been completed and will be included in Norfolk County Council's Cycling and Walking Action Plan. The SWRO is meeting with Norfolk County Council and the Environment Agency to discuss the gap in the bank at Horsefen Bank.
- (2) Mr Keith Bacon advised he had responded to the Norfolk County Council Cycling and Walking Strategy consultation highlighting the biased leaning towards cycling. SWRO agreed that this had been noted by Norfolk County Council after receiving other comments of a similar nature.

2/7 To receive any other items of urgent business

(1) Broads Forum update

The following items were discussed at the last Broads Forum:

- Hickling Broad Project
- Mutford Lock
- Tolls (with a presentation from John Packman)

(2) Martham footpath diversion

Mr Keith Bacon advised that he was going to object to the proposed Martham footpath diversion that would essentially close off Cess Staithe from Cess Road.

(3) Improvements to Wroxham/Hoveton train station

Mr Peter Warner highlighted a meeting he was due to attend regarding improvements to Wroxham/Hoveton train station. Mr Warner agreed to update the Forum.

2/8 To note the date of the next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 09 March 2016 at 2pm.

The meeting concluded at 4.42pm.

Chairman