

**Public Question Time**

**Statements submitted by Geoff Doggett and Alison Norman**

**Statement Submitted by Geoff Doggett on behalf of River Waveney Trust  
concerning purchase of Woodland at Geldeston Locks**

***Note: This Statement refers to the Asset Officer's report presented to the Broads Authority meeting on 21 November 2014 and in particular Appendix 3 (due for consideration at Agenda Item no 14)***

The River Waveney Trust has been holding discussions with the BA concerning the disposal of woodland behind the 24 hour moorings at Geldeston Locks. The Trust successfully applied and subsequently had registered, the asset by South Norfolk DC under the "Community Right to Bid" legislation. The Trust has expressed an interest in acquiring the freehold of the woodland and has until 4 March to complete a transfer, subject to satisfactory negotiations with the BA.

This report confirms the Trust's willingness to negotiate a transfer of ownership and proposes the following notes to guide the transfer:

1. The River Waveney Trust is pleased to note that the BA is recommended to continue to own and manage the marsh and associated access (Appendix 4). We believe this secures an important habitat and car park provision and the Trust would like to offer support in the BA's management of these assets.
2. The Trust accepts the requirements relating to full public access (the current situation) for the woodland and this is embedded in the Mems and Arts of the Trust as a charity, ensuring ongoing governance.
3. The Trust will survey the site, especially the tree conditions, and produce a Phase One habitat survey during 2015 to guide future habitat management.
4. The Trust notes that maintenance of the woodland has been poor in recent years. It will improve this via regular inspections by local members and scheduled working parties and use of contractors to enhance public safety and enjoyment. The Trust is mindful of the importance of the 24 hour moorings which we note will not require any investment for the next 10 years (Mooring Strategy site no.5).
5. The Trust will provide suitable insurances including public liability in line with current practice and would expect sight of the BA's current insurance conditions so as to comply with current requirements.

6. The Trust will need to know of any dependencies on the site eg: with the Locks Inn and the management of the 24 hour moorings and dyke to the North of the site. The Trust will seek to work with the BA on suitable signage and management of the area, especially regarding visitors arriving by boat.
7. The Trust will pay its own legal fees and Land Registry fee and expects the BA to bear its own legal costs.
8. Bearing in mind the mandate and policies of the River Waveney Trust to enhance public access and enjoyment of the River Waveney, enhance habitats and biodiversity and participate as a partner in the Broadland Catchment Plan, the Trust considers a transfer for a consideration of £1 to be correct. The Trust will relieve the BA of liabilities and costs relating to insurances and maintenance, signage, officer time and surveys. As amenity woodland and with restrictive development potential due to public access needs, the land has low value on the open market. The Trust would hope that the BA as a responsible public body would be prepared to accept this transfer for no consideration in the spirit of the community asset registration by a charity with proven asset management capabilities note – the Trust holds a long term lease on 25 acres of buildings, woodland and marsh at Earsham and is negotiating currently with Mid Suffolk DC on taking on a 55 year lease at Scole Pocket Park for similar community use).

G.M.Doggett, - Chair River Waveney Trust.

**Statement Submitted by Alison Norman on behalf of Geldeston Parish Council regarding landholdings in Geldeston. *To be read by Jolyon Oxley, Vice-chair of Geldeston Parish Council***

The Parish Council is in support of all three recommendations in the report, believing that the retention of the moorings, marsh and car park by the Authority and the intention to retain public access over the copse are in the best interest of both Geldeston residents and visitors.

Working with the Broads Authority regarding the issues around these pieces of land has often been challenging for the Parish Council, and I am sure that it has been similarly time consuming and frustrating for you.

We would like to be able to build stronger, more timely communication between our organisations in future. I know from talking to both Officers and Members that the Broads Authority, like the Parish Council, wish to do the best for Geldeston.

Alison Norman – Chair of Geldeston Parish Council