



BROAD SHEET



Boats moored in adjacent waters at Brundall

New Act tightens up safety on the Broads

New safety controls on the Broads designed to help the boating public will be introduced next spring following the passing of the Broads Authority Act in July.

Stephen Johnson, Chairman of the Broads Authority, said:

"I am absolutely delighted that this important updating of our legislation has finally become law. Now we will get on with implementing the provisions with the aim of making the Broads an even safer place to enjoy."

From April 2010 owners of all boats will be required to have third party insurance with a minimum cover of £2million except unpowered craft 6m² and under. Most boat owners have already taken out this level of insurance which is offered by a number of companies but the Broads Authority is keen that all boat owners should be properly covered, and will check the compliance as boat owners renew their tolls.

The Broads Authority Act will enable the Boat Safety Scheme, a four yearly boat MOT designed to reduce the risk of fire and explosion, to be maintained in line with the national scheme. The BSS was fully implemented on the Broads in April this year.

"The new Act brings boats in line with cars, so they now need to be registered, insured and have an equivalent MOT," said Director of Waterways Trudi Wakelin. "Boats can be dangerous and cause a considerable amount of damage in the event of an incident, and reasonable precautions need to be taken as far as possible."

Boats which are moored in adjacent waters will also have to be similarly registered, insured and, where appropriate, carry a boat safety certificate. Adjacent waters are dykes and broads off the main navigation where boats which are owned by more than one person are moored.

"We have extended the requirement for a boat safety certificate to boats in adjacent waters to maintain a consistent level of safety with the navigation area. Areas such as marinas have a high density of moored vessels, so the potential risk to other boats from a fire or explosion is higher," explained Trudi. "We will be surveying adjacent waters this winter to identify the numbers of affected boats off the main navigation, and talk to their owners to explain the new rules."

The Act will also improve the arrangements for managing water skiing. It will make the voluntary system, managed over the last three years in conjunction with the Eastern Rivers Ski Club, compulsory.

The Act allows the number of ski permits to be limited and requires water skiers to have insurance and a ski boat driver qualification and boats to be tested for noise and wash.

Mark Wells, Chairman, NSBA
"The Norfolk and Suffolk Boating Association (NSBA) believes it's in all boaters' interests for vessels on the Broads to be insured. The Broads can be very busy at times: we wouldn't venture on the roads without insurance, why should the rivers be any different? It's a part of the Broads Act which the NSBA has always supported."

Julian Barnwell, Chairman, Eastern Region - British Water Ski, said: "We have been leading the way on safety and there has been a great relationship between us and the Broads Authority. We are delighted that the changes are now law so we can ensure that water skiing continues in a safe and responsible manner on the Broads."

Also from April 2010 all hire boats will need to be licensed to ensure a higher level of safety for passengers. This includes day boats which are let with holiday cottages.

The requirement follows a recommendation by the DTI's Marine Accident Investigation Branch after a hire boat with ten people on board capsized and inverted without warning in 2003.

Licences will ensure that the vessels will be marked for a specific number of passengers, that there will be lifejackets on board for all passengers, that the hirer is given boat handling instruction and the boats will be tested for stability.

The Broads Authority has been working closely with the British Marine Federation, the Broads Hire Boat Federation, the Day Boat Association and hire boat operators to agree licensing conditions, which are up for consultation on the Broads Authority's website, www.broads-authority.gov.uk until December.

Tony Howes, chairman of the Broads Hire Boat Federation, said:

"The Federation is happy with the way the consultation has gone in developing the draft conditions, having worked closely with the Authority to achieve a workable scheme."

The Act ensures the future of Haddiscoe Cut, which links the Rivers Yare and Waveney, as a right of navigation. Although it is in the Broads Authority's navigation area it is owned by

the Environment Agency, which is responsible for maintaining the banks and flood defences. The Broads Authority has agreed to maintain the channel to a depth of 2m at average low water.

Mark Wells, Chairman of the Norfolk and Suffolk Boating Association said: "There are aspects of what is now an Act which boaters can welcome - safety, the ability to control or curtail more extreme forms of water sport such as wake boarding, and the requirement for the Authority to consult the Navigation Committee on any new policy which could have a significant impact on the use of the navigation."

You can read the Broads Authority Act 2009 in full via the National Archives website at: <http://www.opsi.gov.uk>

For more information on specific issues contact the following Broads Authority officers:

Adjacent Waters: Waterways Strategy Officer, Angie Leeper: 01603 756057 or email Angie.Leeper@broads-authority.gov.uk

Insurance: Head of Waterways Strategy and Safety, Steve Birtles: 01603 756078 or email Steve.Birtles@broads-authority.gov.uk

Hire Boat Licensing: Waterways Officer Charlie Middleton: 01603 756058 or email Charlie.Middleton@broads-authority.gov.uk

Tolls: For general inquiries about tolls contact our team on 01603 756080 or via email at tolls@broads-authority.gov.uk



Some of the 7 million visitors who enjoyed the Broads this year

Bright Summer for Broads' Holiday Industry

The tourism industry on the Broads has benefited from a bumper summer, thanks to the trend for holidaying at home.

Around 50 more hire boats are on the water than last year and hire boat companies are reporting all their boats booked out over the peak weeks of the season. Holiday parks and camp sites have also seen huge increases in bookings. Clippesby Hall Campsite near Acle was fully booked for the summer holidays by April and Hoseasons is reporting a huge rise in numbers at its parks and lodges, over half of which are from new customers.

Tim Fullam, Marketing Director of Hoseasons said: "We've had a really good year. Our boats were sold out for the summer. Self-catering family holidays in East Anglia are up by 44%. I think people are increasingly finding that holidays in this country represent value for money. The challenge for us all is to make sure they have a good enough time to want to repeat it."

Day boats are also seeing a boom, with Broads hire companies unable to cope with the demand at times.

Paul Greasley, Managing Director of Broads Tours said: "This year we've had an excellent number of sunny days and we've been swamped with customers. People are prepared to wait two hours to hire a boat for one hour. We pride ourselves on giving a

high level of service but we just haven't got enough boats this year."

Tourism figures are expected to be well up on last year's 7 million – and many attractions around the Broads are benefiting. Visitors to Toad Hole Cottage, the Broads Authority's Victorian marshman's museum at How Hill, have increased by more than 3,000 on this period last year. Broads Tours say their passenger trip boats are regularly fully booked, as are those run by the Broads Authority on the Edwardian style launch Liana at Beccles.

The Authority's Head of Tourism Development, Bruce Hanson, said: "We believe visitor numbers to the Broads could be up by as much as 5% or more. Many more people are choosing to holiday in the UK this year and I think the Broads has benefited because more and more people are becoming environmentally aware. They recognise what a wonderful place the Broads is for those seeking a green destination where they can relax and escape the pressures of daily life."

The future is looking brighter for some Broads pubs too. The Pleasure Boat Inn at Hickling reopened in July, the Maltsters at Ranworth is also trading again and Coldham Hall at Surlingham, currently undergoing refurbishment, is set to reopen its doors.



Boating on the Broads has been a hit with holiday-makers this summer

Restoration of island helps dredging

An innovative scheme to restore a lost island as a dredging disposal site for Heigham Sound is currently being piloted with the help and agreement of Norfolk Wildlife Trust.

The long-term vision is for about 300, 7ft high bespoke steel cages lined with textile bags in which the dredged material is deposited. These cages form the perimeter of an island which will be infilled with wet dredgings at the entrance to Duck Broad. The baskets are expected to show 1ft above the water and when the island is created reed marsh will be encouraged to grow.

The Broads Authority has designed and built the cages based on gabions filled with soil and rock which have been used by the British Army as barricades in Afghanistan. Two successful trials of the baskets have already been run in soke dykes this year.

In September three baskets were installed at between one and a half and two metres into the mud to test the ground bearing strength of the bed of the broad.



Steel cages being trialled for dredging disposal

Rivers Engineer Robert Savage who invented the scheme and has been working on it for two years said: "The structural integrity will be tested when the wet dredgings are put in. As the mud in the centre of the island consolidates it will become self supporting and reduce the load on the baskets."

"We have explored every option for dredging disposal on Heigham Sound and Hickling Broad over the last few years and this seems to be the only option available currently."

Planning permission will be sought in October. It is expected that the initial island to be constructed will be 20m x 20m in area and that if the trial proves successful it will be extended to 40m wide by 250m long, on the site of original reedbeds, which would allow work on dredging Heigham Sound to begin.

If this pilot scheme is a success it could be rolled out to restore other eroded islands across the Broads.



Timmy Lamb

Broads sailor in charge of dredging team

Third generation Broads man Timmy Lamb is the new supervisor of dredging work in the Broads.

He took up his role on September 1st and is responsible for the eight strong team who dredge the rivers on a daily basis.

Timmy, who was born and bred in the Broads village of Thurne and lives there with his wife Ann and two sons, comes from a well known sailing family.

He said: "I am very excited about the job. I've got a boat and I know where all the shallow bits are. Hopefully I'll be able to feed my local knowledge and information from contacts into the work of the Broads Authority. Since we took the dredging operation in house we're also achieving more cost-effective dredging."

Timmy has worked for the Authority for 11 years. He began in 1998 working on a six month weed harvesting contract which became permanent the following year.

Timmy was appointed Senior River Works Technician in 2004, building and maintaining moorings and tree clearance.

"There's nothing like clearing the banks and giving sailors free wind," he said with obvious satisfaction. "The men in both the river works and dredging teams all have boating interests and we all hope we can make a difference for boaters."

Timmy's wife, Ann Hobday, a graphic designer, who has sailed all her life, has also worked for the Broads Authority.

Timmy replaces recently retired Bob Abel who worked for the Broads Authority's main contractor, May Gurney, for 20 years. He transferred to the Broads Authority when it took the dredging operation in house two years ago.

Weedcutting in overdrive

Since clear water has returned to many parts of the upper reaches of the Broads, water plants have been growing more prolifically. The weed harvester has been active cutting weed from Thurne to Somerton, Horsey Mere, Waxham Cut, on the Waveney from Beccles to Geldeston, on the Bure from Belaugh to Coltishall and Wayford to Dilham, on the Wensum through Norwich, and at Whitlingham Broad. Plant surveying has been carried out in Hickling and Barton Broads and Horsey Mere as well as in the river reaches to feed information into management programmes.

Super Safety Days a big success

Four Super Safety Days held at 24 hour moorings have proved a big success in educating the public on safe boating and byelaw requirements.

Broads Authority staff spoke to 125 helmsmen at St Benet's Abbey, Somerleyton and Cantley between May and August.

Twenty four written warnings were issued for speeding and eight boats were calibrated to help prevent further offences. A total of 74 helmsmen were stopped for not displaying a toll,

54 of them on the first safety day on May 2nd at St Benet's. Twenty three were not displaying registration marks.

Head Navigation Ranger, Adrian Vernon, said: "Not displaying a valid toll plaque causes misperception and concern amongst toll payers who have both paid and displayed."

Ten out of 19 boats failed hazardous boat checks, mainly on fuel and gas issues, six of which had boat safety certificates. A hired day boat was found

not to have a toll or valid BSS certificate and would not have passed a BSS inspection. Another recently purchased cruiser which was two years into its BSS certificate was found to have several defects that called the BSS inspection into question. Both incidents are being investigated.

Said Adrian: "Of the people stopped 99% were content and understood the reasons for it. Toll payers, as usual, expressed their wish for enforcement and supported the actions of the Broads Authority staff."



The finishing touches are put to Gay's Staithe

Disabled access for Gay's Staithe

Popular quiet moorings at Gay's Staithe, just off Barton Broad, have been extensively refurbished this summer. The timber work has been renewed and safety ladders and chains have been installed.

An easy access path has been laid at Barton for the mooring of the Broads Authority's passenger vessel, the solar boat 'Ra', to

assist passengers in wheelchairs.

Safety chains which were fitted to Reedham Quay in partnership with Broadland District Council have already helped a boater who fell in the water.

Several moorings and signs have been repaired and fallen trees, which impeded navigation, have been removed.

Help and advice by Broads Authority's staff



Friendly advice from a navigation ranger on Oulton Broad

A more transparent approach to enforcing byelaws has been approved by the Broads Authority.

Guidance and advice will continue to be used to steer boaters in the right direction rather than measures resulting in instant prosecution.

The new policy allows mitigating circumstances to be taken into account before deciding whether or not to prosecute. It replaces a 13 year old policy that made no provision for enforcement short of prosecution.

Trudi Wakelin, Director of Waterways, explained: "We are adopting a staged approach which sets out the Authority's philosophy of giving advice and guidance to boaters before getting to the point of prosecution. We acknowledge most people are responsible and we aim to give clear advice about how we expect them to use the Broads before we prosecute. Our new policy recognises our educational role, and is less about a heavy handed authoritarian approach.

Survey results will help guide priorities

Thank you to all the boat owners who completed our toll payers' survey, sent out with Broad Sheet in February, or filled it in on-line.

Nearly 1,300 people responded to the questionnaire which asked for views on the Authority's future financial strategy, priorities for maintaining the Broads navigation, and feedback on the Authority's performance.

A full independent report on the findings will be presented to the Navigation Committee in October and to the Authority in November to consider how the Authority responds to the issues raised.

Stephen Johnson, Chairman of the Broads Authority, said: "We would like to thank the large number of toll payers who took the trouble to respond to our survey. It provides very useful information and we will listen to the views expressed.

"We are committed to ensuring that boating on the Broads remains an enjoyable and unique experience. Listening to the views of boat owners is important. It helps shape our thinking and one of the benefits of the survey are the fantastic ideas that users of the Broads have for improvements."

Website Tips

Make the most of the Broads Authority's website to help you navigate and enjoy boating on the Broads.

www.broads-authority.gov.uk

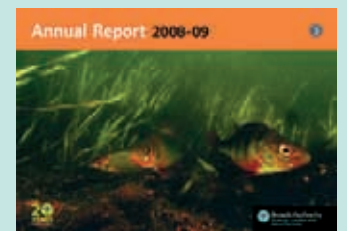
Under 'Boating' you will find a wealth of information which includes urgent boating news, where to launch your craft, find 24 hour moorings and electric charging points and details of Gt Yarmouth and Norwich Yacht Stations. The Navigating section covers advice on safety and crossing Breydon Water, tide tables, bridge heights and notices to mariners.

The Authority's colourful **Annual Report** is an easy on-line read, highlighting the previous year's work. The text has been kept short and sharp, and particular colours applied to make reading the report easier on screen. You can find it by doing a search on 'annual report 2008-09'.

For Broads Authority and Navigation Committee **minutes and agendas** click on 'Authority' on the Home Page and then 'Committees and Forums'.

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And if you have a query, comment, compliment or complaint click on 'Contact' on the Home Page and fill in the form.



However, where there are some individuals who will continue to flout the rules they will be prosecuted."

Maximum fines on the Broads are £2,500. This year to date there are three cases pending prosecution and seven cases being investigated, ranging from failing to stop after damage, helming without care and caution, speeding and failing to license a boat.

Twelve Broads Authority navigation rangers, supported by 50 volunteers, patrol the Broads in the summer to help the public boat safely, ensure they respect the environment and provide help and guidance.

Six rangers, again assisted by volunteers, patrol the Broads in the winter. They also complete small-scale river works such as tree clearance, retrieval of debris and litter removal, and assist with flooding incidents.