



BROAD SHEET

How the Broads Bill will help boaters

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- Extra National Park Grant

Toll payers will benefit when the new Broads Bill becomes law

The new Broads Bill will make the Broads a safer place and allow more money to be spent on the navigation.

The present Broads Act limits the amount of money that the Authority can spend on improving and maintaining the waterways for boaters including how much we can spend on dredging.

Under the present arrangements only money raised from tolls can be spent on these important jobs. The Bill will combine the Authority's Navigation and General Accounts into one more understandable arrangement, and monies can then be spent where they are most needed.



Emergency tree clearance work at Belaugh



Completed tree and scrub clearance work at Tyler's Cut, Dilham

Last year and this year, by special permission of the Minister, the Authority is doing exactly that.

We are using our National Park Grant to help with the backlog of dredging. Our dredging programme is funded £400,000 from the tolls you pay and a

further £250,000 from a special National Park Grant.

This is an exception, but the new Bill, as well as merging the two accounts, will remove this restriction on the uses of National Park Grant and the requirement that navigation expenditure can only be met from toll income.

It will protect toll income by requiring the Authority to spend at least the income received for navigation on navigation expenditure.

The Bill is therefore absolutely critical to the future of all those of us who use boats on the Broads.



Boat Safety Scheme

Are you ready for it?

The Broads Authority will be introducing the Boat Safety Scheme (BSS) from 1 April 2007. Boats that do not have a valid BSS certificate by the appropriate introductory date will not be permitted to navigate the Broads.



The BSS applies to all boats with engines and/or cooking, heating, lighting, refrigerating and other domestic appliances, which will need to pass an examination before they can be permitted to navigate the Broads. The scheme will not apply to open boats propelled solely by outboard motors and not fitted with any of the above appliances.

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Broads Bill briefs for boaters

★ The Broads Authority has been forced down the route of a Private Bill as the only way to introduce new powers to improve safety and modernise the workings of the Authority.

★ The Bill will introduce the Boat Safety Scheme and Compulsory Third Party Insurance, and extend them to waters directly connected to the Broads navigation. Third Party Insurance has been a local ambition for many years. Smaller non-powered craft will be exempt from this provision.

★ The Broads Authority will be able to introduce a Broads-wide system of licensing for hire boats. This follows a key recommendation of a Maritime and Coastguard Agency report. We can use our skill and experience to ensure hire boats are safe.

★ The Bill includes a power so that the Authority can enter land to manage overhanging vegetation that poses a hazard to the navigation.

★ The Haddiscoe Cut has an unusual status, being owned by the Environment Agency,

and part of the navigation area, but without a public right of navigation over it. The Bill will regularise the arrangement including the responsibilities for maintenance.

★ The Great Yarmouth Port Authority is responsible for the navigation on Breydon Water and the Lower Bure, but as its interests have moved seawards the Broads Authority has by agreement taken over patrolling the area to ensure that all boats and hire craft in particular can safely navigate between the north and the south. In time the new bill will formalise this arrangement.

★ There is currently a voluntary agreement to manage water-skiing – limiting permits, requiring membership of a local club and formal training for the boat driver. The Bill will give the Authority powers to manage in line

with the agreement and to distinguish between water-skiing and wakeboarding so that they can be separately managed.

★ Following concerns from the local hire boat industry the Authority is discussing with the Environment Agency a provision that would give the Authority powers to control pollution from rogue boats.

★ The present Broads Act requires the Authority to appoint a Norwich Navigation Officer for the port of Norwich and a Navigation Officer for the rest of the Broads. The appointment of the Norwich Navigation Officer requires the approval of the Secretary of State. This distinction is a hangover from when Norwich was an active port. The last cargo was brought up to Norwich in 1989, the same year that the Authority came into existence. The Bill will remove

Boating organisations help towards new Bill

In September the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Broads Authority met with national and local boating organisations to hear their approach to a number of the key clauses in the Authority's Private Bill. There was a lot we agreed on.

The meeting included representatives from the Royal Yachting Association, British Marine Federation, Inland Waterways Association, Norfolk and Suffolk Boating Association, Broads Hire Boat Federation and, of course, Martin Broom, Chairman of the Authority's Navigation Committee.

Rod Carr, Chief Executive of the Royal Yachting Association, said "The RYA and the Authority have reached an agreement in principle on some of the more strategic and high level aims of the Bill. A formal agreement has yet to be reached on these and some other provisions of the draft Bill, but negotiations are ongoing and we hope that all of the outstanding substantive issues can be resolved before the Bill is presented to Parliament. We hope to soon reach a position whereby we can lend our support to the Authority's Private Bill."

The Authority is now working on a detailed agreement which will cover how the Bill is implemented when it has passed through Parliament.

New Minister on Fact Finding Visit



Barry Gardiner MP discussing dredging with Kerry Turner, Chairman of the Broads Authority and John Packman, Chief Executive.

Earlier this year the Authority's Chief Executive John Packman together with Chairman Kerry Turner met with the Broads Authority's new Minister in Defra, Barry Gardiner. It was a useful meeting which discussed the long term challenges facing the Broads including climate change, the Water Framework Directive, saline intrusion and the backlog of maintenance, before turning to the Bill.

The Minister expressed support for what the Authority is trying to achieve through the Bill, but was

unwilling to support the name change, because of the implications on other national parks of the absence of the Sandford Principle.

Our Chairman has always made it clear that the change of name might have to be sacrificed if agreement couldn't be reached so that the more important provisions involving public safety and the modernisation of the Authority could go forward.

The Minister said "I welcome the suggestion that you might incorporate the principles of

sustainable development in the General Duty of the Authority. This would give the Authority a rather more modern wording than the rest of the national park family and is in tune with the Government's approach."

We were delighted that the Minister expressed support for the inclusion of a reference to sustainable development in the Authority's General Duty. At its meeting at the end of September the Authority agreed that it would further consult on a rewording of its General Duty to incorporate those principles.

We thought it was important to get the Minister out to see the Broads for himself. We invited him for a visit to Carlton Marshes because the site brings together all the issues about the management and disposal of sediment.

Staff from the Environment Agency, the Suffolk Wildlife Trust and BESL were on hand to help show the Minister the complexity of the issues and the opportunities to develop a new dredging site for Oulton Broad. It could also offer opportunities to create new footpaths and enhanced habitat for wildlife.

Making progress in dredging the Broads

the requirement for a separate Norwich Navigation Officer.

★ The Bill will widen the range of bodies consulted on the appointment of members to the Authority by the Secretary of State.

★ National Government is helping with the costs of the new Bill by way of a three year extra National Park Grant. The extra grant amounted to £1.5 million over 3 years in recognition of the additional costs of maintaining the navigation, managing a wetland and providing access to the public.

To keep up to date with the progress of the Broads Bill please go to the Broads Authority's website:

www.broads-authority.gov.uk

In the 1980s you could dredge and dump a cubic metre of mud for 60p. Today that same cubic metre could cost as much as £30.

This year our dredging programme is funded £400,000 from tolls and £250,000 by National Park Grant

As boat owners you will know that as an authority we need a proactive, rather than a reactive, approach to the dredging of the Broads. That is why one of the key pieces of work for the Authority this year has been the preparation of a Sediment Management Strategy.

For the first time a comprehensive hydrographic survey has been carried out of the Broads. The Strategy has looked at measures to reduce the volume of silt entering the system as well as the amount already in the rivers and broads. Research from Cranfield University has established that the two main sources of silt are via the headwaters and bank erosion.

The good news is that the current rate of dredging (approximately 42,500 cubic metres costing £650,000) exceeds the volume of silt coming into the system, estimated at between 7,500 and 24,300 cubic metres. We are winning against the silt.

A comparison between the present profile for the rivers and broads and what boat owners would like shows that in an ideal world 1.8 million cubic metres would need to be removed from the system. Most of this sediment is in the bottom of the broads rather than the rivers.

Our biggest problem is that with today's regulations we just don't have anywhere to put the mud when we have dredged it. Bankside capacity for silt disposal is significantly less than the amount that needs to be removed. Worse, that fact applies in nearly every section of the system.

Another huge problem is the escalating cost of removal and disposal of dredged material. In the 1980s dredging and dumping

a cubic metre of mud would cost from 60p to £1.

Today dredging and removing that same cubic metre from a river like the Yare can cost £30! Indeed the average cost per cubic metre today is £13 and these high costs greatly reduce the volume that can be dredged using toll income.

Increased regulation means that the traditional practice of disposal to the adjacent bankside is now only possible in a very few locations.

Over the five years 2002-06 the Authority will have removed 138,500 cubic metres, 29% more than was achieved in the five years before it was established. If the Barton Broad Clear Water 2000 Project is included the figure rises to 185,000 cubic metres, 71% more. But more needs to be done and the Strategy will guide the Authority's dredging programme.

The findings of the Strategy have reinforced the importance of one of the provisions in the Authority's new Private Bill, the merging of the General and Navigation Accounts. The present Broads Act is based on the principle that the maintenance of the navigation can only be funded from toll income.

With increased costs toll payers can't provide sufficient income for this to be the case and we have

managed to persuade Ministers to allow us to use our National Park Grant to assist with the backlog of dredging. This year our dredging programme is funded £400,000 from tolls and £250,000 by National Park Grant.

The results from the Sediment Management Strategy will be used to prioritise the Authority's dredging programme and the final report will be presented to the Authority in January. We hope to make the depth survey results available via the Broads Authority website when we have identified the best way of displaying the large amount of information.

STOP PRESS

At the Broads Authority Navigation Committee on Thursday 26 October the members and officers agreed to recommend an increase in tolls* 4% above inflation and the hire boat offset for 2007/08 to fund an extra £100,000 to be spent on dredging the rivers and broads and the creation of suitable disposal sites for the sediment. This would bring the total dredging budget to a record £3 million. The final decision will be made by the Broads Authority at its meeting on Friday 24 November.

*6.1% for hire boats and 9.9% for the private fleet

Example of dredging cost: St Benet's Abbey dredging Total volume removed 6,000 cubic metres at a cost of £14 per cubic metre. Total project cost £85,000. Completed February 2005.



Dredging at Thurne Mouth



Mudpumping at St Benet's Abbey



Disposal of dredgings at St Benet's for land raising



Broads Authority Vessels and Boat Safety Scheme

The Broads Authority has reviewed all of its vessels that will require a Boat Safety Scheme Certificate and has been working hard to ensure they all comply with the requirements of the Boat Safety Scheme.

All but one of our works vessels and launches now have Boat Safety Scheme Certificates. The final vessel is currently undergoing work and will be compliant by the end of this year in line with the formal introduction of the Boat Safety Scheme on 1 April 2007.

Extra National Park Grant pays for staithe improvements at Ranworth and How Hill

Approximately £300,000 of the £500,000 per annum additional National Park Grant received is being used directly for navigation purposes. A condition survey of Mutford Lock, new signs and vital safety improvements at moorings have been funded from the extra money. Two very successful projects which you will notice have been the transformation of the moorings at How Hill and the landscape work at Ranworth Staithe, two of the busiest locations on the Broads.

The work by Broadland Environmental Services Limited at How Hill to improve flood protection gave the opportunity to improve the facilities for the boating public.



Ranworth (above) How Hill (below)



Making the Broads safer for all boaters

Although boating on the Broads is seen as pretty safe, there are up to 10 fires on boats every year! But ensuring that all boats at risk comply with the Boat Safety Scheme (BSS) can reduce these incidents.

So, this Scheme – coming in on 1 April 2007 – will help make our waterways even safer. Most of us keep our boats safe and in good condition but through a system of independent inspection deterioration of systems and equipment can be identified and rectified.

The safety scheme is rather like an MoT test for boats, indeed a fair proportion of Broads boats have it already. If you have already obtained a BSS certificate please ensure that the Broads Authority is sent a copy in order that our database can be updated.

A certificate is also often needed to sell a boat for use in other waters. Our scheme will be brought in by byelaws from 1 April 2007. This will be a stop-gap until the Private Bill comes into force which will allow us to keep our scheme in line with the national scheme as it develops on waterways throughout the country.

Hire craft will have to comply with the original boat safety scheme. All private craft will have to comply with the revised requirements, which were published in January 2005. These allow a greater degree of flexibility, and include some advisory items, which we would recommend boat owners should comply with where practicable.

What do I need to do?

Boat owners will have to pay authorised independent examiners to check their craft and issue certificates. Examiners' fees vary, so it may be worth getting several quotes. There are around

25 examiners who cover the Broads and most are willing to give advice about essential work, as is the BSS office. Craft must be maintained to the standard of the BSS throughout the life of the certificate. If you are unhappy with any item identified as failed or in need of technical advice on maintenance and equipment replacement or modification, the BSS office will gladly advise.

BSS examinations will include safety checks, fire escape provision, flues for toxic fume spillage and power connections with potential for electrocution. The owner of a boat that fails any of these checks will be formally notified and offered advice.

Where can I get information?

The second edition of the *Boat Safety Scheme Essential Guide* has now been launched. It takes you step by step through the BSS, identifying hazards, approaches to risk reduction techniques, the legal requirements of the navigation authorities and the best practice standards to keep you and your crew safe when aboard or close to your boat. Available from the BSS website: www.boatsafetyscheme.com, or by post from the BSS office, price £6.30 plus post and packaging.



BSS implementation

1 April 2007

Hire craft over 30sqm
Private motor craft of 21sqm and above

1 April 2008

All remaining hire craft
Private motor craft of 11sqm and above

1 April 2009

Remaining private motor craft
All private sailing craft

Lists of examiners are available from the Broads Authority office on 01603 610734, the BSS office on 01923 201278 and the BSS website, www.boatsafetyscheme.com/searchforanexaminer