

BROAD SHEET



RICHARD JOHNSTONE-BRYDEN

Enjoying the Broads. The toll for a 7.5m² small motor boat has increased by just over £3 a year based on the new sliding scale of toll charges

Small boat owners favoured in tolls decision

Boat owners will see some of the lowest toll increases in more than a decade despite the Broads Authority having to balance cuts to its National Park Grant while continuing its plan to dredge 50,000m³ of mud from the navigation.

New charges for 2011 will favour owners of small boats with outboard motors, sailing dinghies and canoes who will receive an increase of only 2.5%. The Authority is aware that charges for small motor boats have become increasingly out of kilter with other craft and therefore this year they will pay just £2.31 more at £94.74.

Director of Waterways Trudi Wakelin said: "We realise this is a very small concession but it demonstrates we are aware of the issue and are working to address it."

Tolls for a 25m² motor cruiser will rise by 5.2% and the largest boats will pay around 6% more next year.

Over the past six years £1.4 million of the National Park Grant has supported dredging of the navigation area.

This programme comes to an end in March 2011 and therefore tolls will have to rise above inflation to bridge the gap.

The Authority had planned for a 6% toll increase for 2011/12 as part of a three-year financial strategy. However, an extra 35 hire boats on the Broads boosted this year's income from boats by £32,000 which meant that members were able to keep the average increase to 5%.

Broads Authority Chairman Stephen Johnson said: "We are conscious that these are difficult times for everyone. With its limited resources, the Authority is doing its best to be fair to all boat owners, keeping toll increases as low as we can whilst continuing to deliver a high level of service."

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Broads Authority Public meeting

Find out about the work being done by the Broads Authority this year and discuss it with members and staff at the annual public meeting on

Fri 13 May 7.30pm

Acle Recreation Centre,
Bridewell Lane, Acle NR13 3RA

Major changes follow funding cuts

Cuts in Government funding over the next four years will mean significant changes at the Broads Authority but an action plan is in place aimed at maintaining services to boaters and protecting the unique landscape of the Broads.

The Authority's grant will be cut from £4.44 million in 2010-11 to around £3.32 million by 2014-15, a reduction of £1.12 million. It will mean the loss of about 30 jobs with fewer managers and larger teams. Emphasis will be placed on frontline services, on developing partnerships, promoting voluntary work and generating extra income.

Chief Executive John Packman said: "The scale of the reduction in our grant is such that we have had to have a 'root and branch' look at everything we do and big changes are necessary if we are to continue to deliver good value for money. The three major activities funded from tolls, namely dredging, patrolling and maintenance will continue to be funded

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Broads Authority
The Broads - a member of the
National Park family

Dragonfly House 2 Gilders Way Norwich NR3 1UB • 01603 610734
e: broads@broads-authority.gov.uk www.broads-authority.gov.uk

Somerleyton Bridge has new lease of life

Network Rail has committed to enter into a legal agreement undertaking to use its best endeavours to keep Somerleyton and Reedham swing bridges fully operational from the start of the boating season.

Damage to Somerleyton Bridge's pivot mechanism had left the Edwardian swing bridge unworkable for five months from early May, leaving fixed-mast and fly bridge craft on the River Waveney unable to pass through and prompting pressure from the Authority for a long-term solution to be found.

During its closure in October Network Rail spent £1.6 million replacing the central swing bearing and renewing the wheels which support the bridge as it swings while extensive tests and a corrosion survey assessed the need for future refurbishment.

The Broads Authority negotiated Network Rail funding for a lay-by/demasting pontoon upstream of Somerleyton Bridge, which provides much needed mooring facilities while river users wait for the bridge to open. It will be maintained by the Broads Authority.

Somerleyton and Reedham bridges will be fully operational from 18 February and Trowse Bridge from 31 March. Signs on the bridges will give Network Rail contact details should boaters be delayed.

Improved access to Coltishall Common

The Broads Authority is working in partnership with the Coltishall Common's Trust to build a new bridge to improve access from the Trust car park to the 24 hour moorings, part of which will be reserved for disabled visitors.

Over the years the footpath had become slightly eroded and uneven making access difficult for pushchairs and wheelchairs. Broads Authority staff installed the new bridge in December. Snow prevented them from re-turfing and installing reinforcement mesh on the grass area but this will be completed when the ground conditions improve.



New lay-by pontoon at Somerleyton Bridge

Trialling pontoon moorings

The use of pontoons to provide additional mooring facilities is being trialled at Oulton Dyke and Somerleyton Bridge.

The Broads Authority has a programme to enhance the facilities available to river users but increases in the cost of steel piling, fuel and mobilizing heavy plant have made building new moorings very expensive. Pontoons can provide an alternative option. They provide a stable platform at water level, can be supplied using sustainable timber products, will blend into their surroundings once

weathered and don't damage riverside habitats.

Once Oulton Broad has been dredged four timber pontoons will be trialled adjacent to the Dutch Tea Gardens in Oulton Dyke, providing a length of 44m of additional moorings. One of the pontoons has a low freeboard ideal for canoes and rowing boats.

Moorings update

Cantley moorings refurbished

A free 24 hour mooring upstream of The Reedcutters public house at Cantley has been refurbished.

Seventy metres of rotten quay heading have been replaced on the upstream section and the mooring raised to make it drier at high water. A new back rail and capping timbers have been installed on the 40 metre downstream section and the path has been raised. New mooring posts have been fitted and mooring and speed limit signs have been upgraded.

The refurbished Cantley 24 hour moorings



Ludham moorings completed

A new 225m free 24 hour mooring has been completed on the upstream left bank at busy Ludham Bridge. The moorings, which are already proving popular, give access to the road, pub and shop as well as being useful to yachts de-masting.

New mooring projects

This year the Broads Authority plans to extend Herringfleet 24 hour moorings on the River Waveney by about 30 metres, and upgrade at least ten more sites. During the year the programme to add safety ladders, chains and throwing lines to all 24 moorings throughout the system will be completed.

Heigham Sound to be dredged this year



MIKE PAGE

Dredging is due to begin on Heigham Sound on the Upper Thurne in March – a year earlier than expected – subject to approval by Natural England.

A disposal site has been made available by a local landowner along a stretch of existing soke dyke between Candle Dyke and the River Thurne.

It is anticipated that the narrow section between Duck Broad and Meadow Dyke will be dredged during the quieter, early part of the season, before the Three Rivers Race, and that the wider part will have to be completed during the main boating season.

The creation of a trial 'island' at Duck Broad last year was the initial stage in dredging Heigham Sound. A perimeter was created from gabion baskets and the

central void was then filled with sediment to create an island.

Once established this 'island' will start to replace reed marsh lost through erosion. Reed is already beginning to grow back and, despite fears that dredging could cause an outbreak of *Prymnesium parva* algae which can prove toxic to fish, the water quality has remained unaffected. Daily monitoring revealed counts well below the trigger levels for any remedial action. The Authority continues to assess the island's progress and discussion on beginning a larger, one hectare, island continues.

First prosecution under new Act

The first major case arising from Broads Authority Act 2009 offences was taken to court last month and resulted in a successful prosecution. The boat owner was found guilty of non-payment of tolls, failure to comply with a request for information, of using a vessel that did not comply with the boat safety standards and failure to comply with a requirement under the Broads Authority Act 2009 to remove the vessel or carry out remedial works as required. Fines and compensation awarded totalled almost £1500.

Other prosecutions included six people taken to court for speeding and helming without care and caution, with fines and costs totalling £3,500. Nine registration

and Broads Authority Act 2009 offences resulted in legal action. Of those that have been before the court all were found guilty. One further case is awaiting a court date, one is still being investigated and two cases were dealt with by a written warning.

In total, rangers issued nearly 4,500 verbal warnings and 238 written warnings last year, mainly for speeding and helming without care and caution. 290 people were reported for not having valid toll licences and 62 for not displaying toll plaques and/or registration numbers. Broads Control took over 15,000 telephone calls and dealt with 850 reported incidents.

Good year for dredging

We are on target to achieve 50,000m³ of dredging.

The River Bure, from Acle to Thurne, has had over 22,000m³ of sediment removed which improves water depth within the navigation channel to 2m.

On the River Ant, between How Hill and Barton Broad, over 6,000m³ of sediment will be removed to an average depth of 1.5m over the winter. This will complete the dredging of the Ant from the River Bure upstream to Barton Broad.

At Oulton Broad, the team has returned for the second time in three years to dredge large shoals of silt from the bar and North Bay. The remaining navigation channel leading to the Waveney and Oulton Broad Yacht Club has also been dredged to an average depth of 1.8m, removing in total over 8,000m³.

At Haddiscoe Cut over 6,500m³ of sediment has been removed providing an average water depth within the navigation channel of 2m.

Mud-pumping of Ormesby Broad has been completed with 15,000m³ removed, increasing water depth from 0.3m to 1.5m in places and improving water quality. It was paid for by additional National Park Grant funding.

The Authority has dealt with a number of hazardous underwater obstructions, removing wrecks from the River Yare at Bungalow Lane (pictured), Thorpe Rail Bridge and Whitlingham as well as from the river at Berney Arms.



Broads Authority improvements over the last year



Compacting a path



Installing new quay heading timbers



Driving in piling to protect safety ladders



< Treecutting



< Levelling mooring with top soil



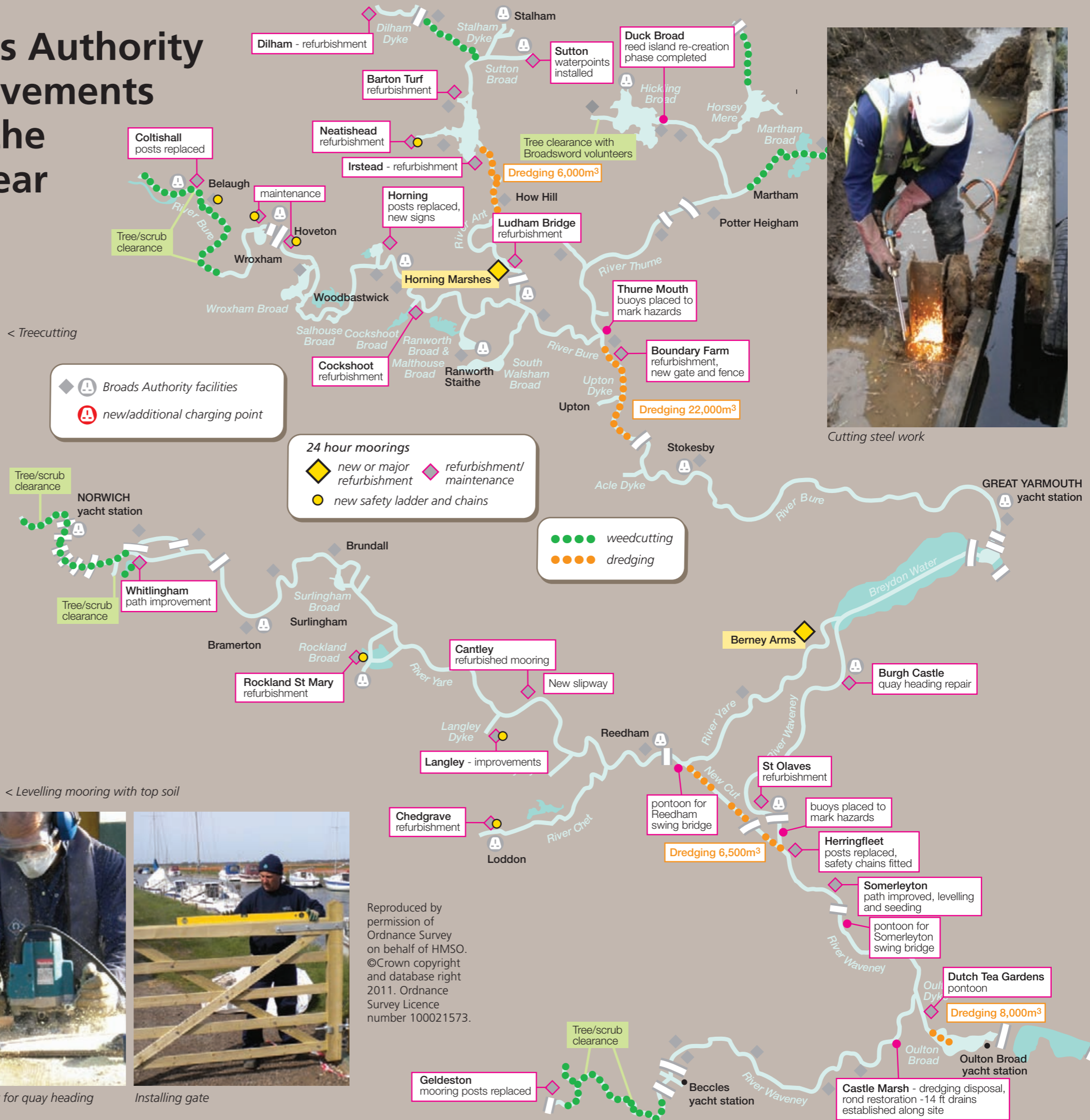
Placing channel markers



Preparing timber for quay heading



Installing gate



Cutting steel work

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Watch out for new channel markers

Piling which can be dangerous to boaters when submerged by high tides is being marked with high profile yellow hazard marker posts as a warning to boaters to keep clear.

Old piling which is being left in place until new setback flood banks have become established can be submerged by high tides causing a hazard to boats because of exposed metal edges and protruding bolts.

The piling is being marked by Broadland Environmental Services Ltd (BESL) with substantial yellow posts, which will stand two metres above high water, warning boaters to stay clear and not to moor. Much of the piling will be removed when the new floodbanks are established which will leave a safer river with more natural reeded edges.

This winter BESL has removed old piling between South Walsham Fleet Dyke and Upton Mill as the new flood banks on Upton and South Walsham Marshes have become established. The edge of the navigation channel has been marked with temporary red marker buoys until natural reed grows.



Left: Disabled angling access at Coldharbour Farm, River Thurne

Below left: The new parish slipway at Thurne Dyke

Below right: New footpath at Carlton Marshes



Removing hazardous piling at Upton Marshes

Big strides in flood protection

The Broadland Flood Alleviation Project (BFAP) has made big strides in 2010, strengthening approximately 25km of flood banks and removing hazardous piling.

During 2010 a total of 7.4km of bank has been improved on the Rivers Ant and Bure at Horning Marshes, 5km around Hickling Broad, Horsey Mere and West Somerton, 3km between Candle Dyke and Womack Water and 5.6km from Geldeston to Gillingham on the River Waveney. Work at these sites will continue during 2011. The stretch from Acle Boat Dyke to Great Yarmouth has now been completed with the additional strengthening of 4km of bank on the River Bure in 2010.

As part of the flood defence work BESL (Broads Environmental Services Ltd) have built a new concrete parish slipway at Thurne Dyke for launching small boats, and a 1.3km surfaced path linking Carlton Marshes with Oulton Broad which was completed in the summer. The path was funded through a partnership

project involving the Broads Authority, Environment Agency, Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Environmental Trust.

A hard surfaced footpath has been built upstream of Potter Heigham Bridge, linking the Broads Authority's 24 hour moorings to a set of new fishing platforms. New piling was being installed in Somerton Boat Dyke this winter including the repiling of the Broads Authority's 24 hour mooring on the east bank.

To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the BFAP starting, BESL will be holding a public exhibition at The Forum in Norwich on the 1- 2 June. There will be displays and demonstrations of the work undertaken as part of the project and staff will be on hand to answer any questions.

Weed cutting increases as rivers recover

Weed cutting has become increasingly important in the Broads as the rivers recover from pollution.

Careful environmental management and improvements in waste water treatment have left a legacy of thriving water plants, clear water and increased fish populations, reverting parts of the Broads rivers to their former glory.

The visibly cleaner water now flowing in most of the upper river reaches provides a previously concealed view into the world of underwater life. Anglers report specimen-sized perch in the clear water stretches.

Growth of water plants in the river channels has also been enhanced as more light reaches the once murky depths. Common water plants in the channels are arrowhead, or "strapweed", with its long thin submerged leaves, bur-reed, water crowfoot and lilies.

The Broads Authority has a mid-summer weed cutting programme to ensure a navigable channel is kept open for boats. Navigation rangers identify where the water plants have a potential to be a



Weed cutting on the Upper Thurne

problem to boats and the programme is adjusted accordingly. In Sites of Special Scientific Interest, close working with Natural England is required to ensure appropriate nature conservation protection is balanced with maintaining an open navigation.

The frequency and area that requires cutting has increased over recent years, and is set to remain a significant part of the Authority's waterways management.

Last year weed was cut on stretches of the River Ant, the Upper Bure, Waxham Cut, Catfield Dyke and Somerton on the Upper Thurne, the Upper Waveney and the River Wensum in Norwich where phosphorus levels have been reduced by two thirds in the last ten years. About 250 tonnes of plants were cut from Whitlingham Great Broad, paid for by Norfolk County Council, to keep it clear for sailing, canoeing and windsurfing.

Don't pump your sewage into the river

Boats and houseboats on the Broads should avoid discharging sewage directly into the river – or face a substantial fine.

Raw sewage results in poor water quality and bacterial contamination and is also very unpleasant.

A 1960s byelaw states that it is illegal to discharge sewage from a mechanically propelled boat into the water in the Broads. The only legal exception is for a boat which 'ordinarily voyages seaward past the port of Great Yarmouth'. However, we would ask that boats that do go out to sea either use land-based pump-out facilities or, if essential, discharge their sewage out at sea rather than within the Broads.

The Boat Safety Scheme requires toilets and holding tank systems, which have an overboard discharge line, to have a valve fitted to this discharge line. Whilst in the Broads, boat users must still ensure that sewage is discharged to the holding tank only.

The owner or hirer of a boat which illegally discharges sewage could face prosecution by the Environment Agency which could result in a maximum £2,500 fine.

If you see any boats illegally discharging their sewage, please contact the Environment Agency or the Broads Authority:

Environment Agency
(pollution reports - 24 hrs)
0800 807060

Broads Authority
Broads Control – 01603 756056

We would need to know the registration number of the boat and details of when, where and what you saw.

For more information go to the **Broads Water Quality Partnership** webpage www.broads-authority.gov.uk/managing-rivers-and-broads/broads-water-quality-partnership.html

National Census - appeal to residential boat owners

The ten yearly national census takes place on 27 March. A big white envelope with a purple C on the front will be sent to every household in England and Wales and if you live on a boat it will be sent to the address you are moored at.

If you do not receive the questionnaire by 27 March you should get in touch with the census helpline 0300 0201 1010 (England) or 0300 0201 130 (Wales).

If you are away on holiday for census day, try to complete the questionnaire before you go. For the first time in census history you can now complete your questionnaire online at www.census.gov.uk, using the secure internet access code on the front of your paper questionnaire.

Deputy Census Director Pete Benton said: "It is important to make sure those who live on boats are counted in the 2011 Census. Being counted means that your needs can be identified, as well as your friends, family and your community's."

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at similar levels but we hope through the changes we are making to find efficiencies and savings in areas such as in the procurement of materials and the use of vehicles."

All the maintenance and construction work will be amalgamated in a new Operations Directorate which will share equipment and skills across the different aspects of the Authority's work. A new ranger service will combine work on land and water, avoiding duplication and providing cover for sickness and holidays.

Volunteers will continue to play an important role in the delivery of the Authority's duties. The target is to significantly increase their number over the next four years.

The Authority has submitted a bid for substantial European funding to be spent on developing innovative dredging techniques. It is also part way through delivering a major European funded project with Dutch and Belgian partners to promote sustainable tourism. This has been protected and the necessary contribution from the Broads put aside.

Three high profile visitor hubs are to be created at Whitlingham Country Park, Hoveton and How Hill combining Broads Authority boat trips and visitor centres. The solar powered boat Ra will move from Barton Broad to Whitlingham, where the visitor centre will be open all year, and the Liana from Beccles to Hoveton from where she will give trips upstream to Coltishall. In addition the yacht stations at Norwich and Great Yarmouth will take on a greater role in promoting tourism.

The Authority will work with a number of partners, including local authorities, to look at how information for visitors can still be provided at Beccles, Ranworth and Potter Heigham where its current visitor centres will close.

Broad Sheet online

You can subscribe to an electronic copy of Broad Sheet on our homepage at www.broads-authority.gov.uk

You can use our website to obtain regular **safety alerts and notices to mariners**. Just click 'Update Me' and follow the instructions.



Survey shows boat numbers are holding up

The Broads Authority's 2010 boat survey recorded a total of **11,728 boats** navigating on the northern and southern Broads over three days in August - similar figures to the last count.

This year's survey of boat movements revealed a slight decrease in hire and sailing boats, and a slight increase in private craft compared to the last survey in 2006. Hire boats represented approximately two out every three boat movements.

The River Bure was the busiest with Thurne Mouth, Wroxham and Horning the hotspots. But more boats were recorded this year on the River Thurne downstream of Potter Heigham and on the River Ant.

On the northern rivers a total of 9072 boat movements were recorded, compared with 2,656 on the southern rivers. Boat movements on the Yare and Waveney were slightly up at 29% compared with 26% four years ago.

The census also revealed that helms are heeding Authority advice to traverse Breydon Water at slack water.

The survey is carried out every four years over three days in August at 14 locations. Fifty seven people collected the data.



Step aboard our new website

www.enjoythebroads.com tells you everything you need to know about the Broads. Its gallery of photographs, videos and interactive maps combined with information from boating, birdwatching, fishing and canoeing, to places to visit, and where to eat, drink and stay is aimed both at the holidaymaker and the seasoned boater.

The website has been built and maintained with European funding.

Share your love of the Broads by uploading photos of your visit to Britain's magical waterland in the Flickr section.

To keep up to date with news and events sign up for the Broads Explorer electronic newsletter. Email explorer@broads-authority.gov.uk

Shining a torch for safety

Boat owners are being offered the chance to buy pocket-sized torches for £1 as part of the Broads Authority's ongoing "Stay ALERT" safety campaign.

The handy, lightweight, wind-up torches with 3 high-powered LEDs will be on sale at yacht stations and visitor centres.

Steve Birtles, Head of Safety said: "Most injuries in the Broads are caused when people are getting on and off boats, especially at night, and the torch is a vital

piece of safety equipment which we encourage all boaters to use after dark."

Five super safety days will again be held at St Benet's Abbey, Cantley and Somerleyton 24 hour moorings providing an opportunity for boat owners to seek advice on boat safety and navigation. This year the RNLI will also be on hand to give advice on lifejackets and general safety advice.

stay ALERT
don't fall in