

External Funding Opportunities
Report by Head of Strategy and Projects

Summary: The opportunities for external funding have been reviewed at a meeting involving Kelvin Allen, Phil Durrant, Simon Hooton and Emma Krelle. The Broads Plan Review and the National Park Branding were identified as presenting potential hooks for seeking external funds. They present opportunities to engage with local businesses, the Broads Charitable Trust and the University of East Anglia and explore areas of common interest and potential funding opportunities. The report considers how these ideas might be pursued.

Recommendation: Members consider the conclusions from the review of external funding and agree that the following actions are undertaken:

- (i) A prospectus for engagement with local businesses is prepared in tandem with the Broads Plan Review setting out opportunities for local companies to engage with the Authority on a range of areas including volunteering, training for staff, secondments and sponsorship.
- (ii) Discussions are held with the Broads Charitable Trust to review the progress it is making and the scope for closer collaboration.
- (iii) The scope for a deeper relationship with the University of East Anglia be explored.
- (iv) Consider the potential of 'crowdfunding' for specific Broads Authority projects.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority face a major challenge in the coming year. Government financial support, including National Park Grant and other sources such as Planning Delivery Grant, has already been reduced in real terms by approximately 40% and the prospect following the General Election is for further significant reductions. Members will be aware of the initiative by National Parks UK to engage with the corporate sector in an effort to replace some of that lost income. Pressures on Navigation Expenditure also continue to rise with requests for additional moorings, more dredging, increased patrolling and rubbish collection. This report looks at how the Broads Authority could increase income and corporate engagement locally.

- 1.2 The Authority has been successful in bringing in third party funding from a range of sources: Heritage Lottery Funding for bursaries, EU Interreg support for sustainable tourism and sediment management, sponsorship and advertising income for specific publications such as Broadcaster and the Eating Out Guide and income for land management and initiatives such as the catchment approach. Within this context Phil Durrant and Kelvin Allen met with the Head of Finance and Head of Strategy and Projects to take a strategic overview of external funding opportunities. Consideration was given to potential sources of funds, existing initiatives that Authority staff were exploring and identifying where future development might be possible. The notes of the meeting covering the main discussion points are shown in Appendix 1.
- 1.3 The conclusions from the meeting were that there were four main areas where it might be worth considering developing activity. These were:
- a. Make more use of corporate support
 - b. Build closer links with Love the Broads/Broads Charitable Trust
 - c. Build closer links with UEA
 - d. Develop a clear message on 'priority effort' to maximise external support

The Management Team reviewed the notes and conclusions to the meeting and considered them in terms of strategic objectives, corporate priorities and current staffing resources looking at how the ideas that had come forward could be pursued within existing resources.

2 Opportunities

- 2.1 The Authority is pursuing a major bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund's Landscape Partnership Programme in the order of £3 million and the feedback so far has been extremely positive. The timetable is to submit a bid by the end of May with a decision on a Phase 1 in October. This is the top priority for external funding and involves a team of people working with a range of local organisations.
- 2.2 Discussions are also underway with a potential Dutch partner and local bodies to see if priority projects (such as work on and around Hickling Broad and furthering the Catchment based approach) could be incorporated into funding schemes such as the new round of EU Interreg support.
- 2.3 Key sources of external funding, such as the European Union, domestic Lottery Funds and corporate and charitable trusts, all provide various opportunities though there are often allied constraints. These can include a proportion of matched funding, the competitive nature of giving (meaning effort can sometimes be unfruitful) and the requirement for innovation rather than supporting statutory duties and establishment costs.

3 Engagement with Local Businesses

3.1 The Authority's engagement with local businesses, beyond the hire boat industry, has been quite limited. Aviva has provided some specific advice and a few local companies have used the Authority's resources to provide training and volunteering opportunities for their members of staff. On the back of the Broads Plan review and the National Park branding there is the potential to engage with local companies on a range of issues such as:

- (i) Contributing to the long term thinking on the future of the Broads as part of the Broads Plan Review;
- (ii) Potential for corporate volunteering;
- (iii) Secondments of members of staff to support the work of the Authority and gain experience in the public sector; and
- (iv) Sponsorship of specific activities and initiatives;

3.2 Local companies will need to understand the benefits for them of engaging with the Broads Authority and it is therefore proposed that a prospectus setting out the opportunities be developed. This can pick up on the suggestion about a clear message on priority effort.

4 Broads Charitable Trust

4.1 The Broads Charitable Trust and the Love the Broads campaign provide a charitable framework for promoting local corporate sponsorship so that a suite of opportunities can be promoted to potential supporters. Collaboration with the Broads Charitable Trust may well reap benefits but does need sensitive handling to ensure both bodies are comfortable with the details, any legal issues are considered and resolved and there is clarity over how opportunities that are unlocked are carried forward.

4.2 The Authority also has a direct relationship with its 10,000 boat owners and Members may have ideas about how we could capitalise on that for the benefit of the Broads.

5 Strengthening contact with UEA

5.1 The Authority has had a long relationship with the University of East Anglia, particularly the School of Environment Sciences with joint research and experimental work over the last 25 years. There are significant funds (especially from Europe) to support research and an increasing desire to see this as 'applied research'. As elements of the work of the Authority are innovative there could be opportunities for closer collaboration here. A comprehensive and strategic exploration of opportunities in the current economic circumstances could bring dividends.

5.2 There is a range of expertise at UEA that could be allied very closely with Broads Authority interests be it climate change adaptation, ecosystem services approach, holistic water management, sediment management or more generic interests from river engineering to biomass energy to sustainable living.

6 Environmental Crowdfunding

6.1 One of the ideas not discussed in the meeting was the potential to use 'crowdfunding' to finance specific small-scale environmental projects. Wikipedia defines it as "Crowdfunding is the practice of funding a project or venture by raising monetary contributions from a large number of people, typically via the internet." Successful crowdfunding tends to be related to projects with distinct tangible results so that the public can see the benefits. Officers believe this is worth further investigation.

Background papers: none

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Date of report: 3 March 2015

Broads Plan Objectives: PE1

Appendices: APPENDIX 1 – Notes from a meeting on external funding opportunities

Notes from a meeting on external funding opportunities

File Note

Subject: External Funding exploration group
Date: 6th February 2015
Author: Simon Hooton

Present: Kelvin Allen, Phil Durrant, Emma Krelle, Simon Hooton

Purpose: To consider the main external funding sources; the current opportunities presenting themselves to officers; possible pathways into the future.

1. Working from base table of main funding sources, a couple of extras were added and some commentary added for certain sources: see appendix 1 for full details.

Headlines were:

- a. Economic development zones may give opportunities with re-framed ideas. There is one in Great Yarmouth and hinterland may be relevant
 - b. Horizon 2020: primarily about research but is trying to pull in private companies to academic led ideas. Total amount of funds are high but we may need the help of UEA (or others) to find appropriate channels.
 - c. HLF/Landscape Partnership Schemes: signs from the Ouse/Nene area that catchment groups are seeking LPS funds although probably not for a 2015 submission. We raised some issues about how this could be statutory functions and may not be supported by HLF – worth keeping an eye on.
 - d. Off-setting – carbon or otherwise. Still in its infancy and no great clarity about ways and potential. Idea of a local carbon off-setting fund especially for our visitors was raised: may need to be channelled through a charitable body for greater uptake.
 - e. Rod licence money: KA felt it currently is getting swallowed up in EA but with the Broads being the largest inland fisheries there would be a case for seeing money set aside specifically. Currently most fishing in the Broads is free at point of fishing. Potential for getting some donation money from anglers, if the rod licence apportionment cannot be resolved.
 - f. The Love the Broads initiative appears to have potential but may need more support to help it to group and develop it the right way. There could be large income available through web-based initiatives.
2. The current opportunities were considered and again observations made about the relative importance and viability of the ideas. General conclusions were:
 - a. While getting multiple benefits is a good idea, there are times it might be worth pursuing a particular topic as long as that was part of the core Broads Plan objectives;
 - b. Using our money and matching it up seems sound. There are bureaucracy things to consider when using EU money but continental partners often seemed to have more central support and a willingness to take the lead. Seeking the matching funds from other external bodies can create vulnerabilities (one unsuccessful, all unsuccessful) but might allow more opportunities to be taken up;
 - c. Money is not the only barrier – staff time can also be part of the picture. However having staffing in the bids including support staff like financial help is one route and recognising it is for a set period of time helps;

- d. The tie back to the Broads Plan is important – and the review of the Broads Plan needed to incorporate suitable hooks for seeking external funds;
 - e. Reference is made to the Broads in many key development plans & strategies and we ought to make good use of these (e.g. New Anglia’s Strategic Economic Plan). Closer links with economic development officers could bring benefits.
 - f. Research money is a large pot and with the emphasis on applied research there may be opportunities to make more of this.
3. Three possible new pathways were identified to follow:
- a. Make more of corporate support**
The view was expressed that many private companies might value and benefit from opportunities to work with us. It was noted that NPs UK would be tackling the bigger companies but the EDP Top100 might be worth local effort. This could be seeking overt sponsorship – support through a particular product; in kind support – team building, seconding staff time, in house resources; partnership development – longer term support to meet mutually beneficial end points. The new branding gave an additional motivation. There was discussion around whether giving to an ‘Authority’ would maximise opportunities and there could be a link to the Broads Charitable Trust.
 - b. Build closer links with Love the Broads/ Broads Charitable Trust**
There would appear to be good potential here but maybe more effort needed to go into the seeking of funds and BA submitting projects for support. Opportunities ranged from just increasing current effort to looking at electronic based giving (e.g. donations for every transaction linked to advertising) to establishing larger more flagship style projects to work together on collectively. Perhaps we need to consider clearly the BA appointed trustees role (and this may also relate to Whitlingham Charitable Trust). Again the branding story adds a motivational point.
 - c. Build closer links with UEA**
There are significant funds in research as well as new people resources that could be helping. The profile of working together would be good as well. With a growing emphasis on applied research, the off-shoots from UEA in the environmental/low carbon world working with the private sector and landowners, and a continual range of students passing through perhaps we needed to make some high level contacts and develop a strategic approach.
 - d. Develop a clear message on ‘priority effort’ to maximise external support**
People enjoy joining, and contributing, to a success. Perhaps we need to pull out some short term focal points for effort. This would not be so much a ‘flagship project’ (such as Barton Broad) but priority effort on a theme within a 18-36 month period (and perhaps needing some developmental time so the effort gets off to a rapid start). This could be tied with the new National Park branding. For example, using the branding and the recent surveys, BA could say we wanted to put in some priority effort on ‘Access’ (or biodiversity, or water management etc.) in all its manifestations. All the other work would continue but we’d put the focus of corporate funds, research, volunteer effort, visitor giving onto access with 2 or 3 particular targets to crack in that time.
4. It was agreed Simon would write up some notes and submit to the others to make sure they are happy. This could then be reported back to MT for them to consider how they felt about the observations and ideas. This in turn could lead to a simple report back to Members with any recommendations, in due course, from Management.