

Review of the Sustainable Tourism Strategy

Report by Head of Communications and Tourism and Promotion Officer

Summary: This report sets out the rationale for, and the process of, reviewing the Strategy and Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism in the Broads 2011-15 and the key aims in producing a new strategy and action plan for the next five years.

1 Background

- 1.1 The 2011-15 strategy and associated action plan was adopted by the Broads Authority in 2011. Based on extensive research and consultation, it existed as a destination management guide for use by all those with an interest in the area to enhance, manage and promote sustainable tourism in the Broads.
- 1.2 While the Broads Authority was responsible for facilitating the creation of the strategy and, in collaboration with Broads Tourism led on its development, the responsibility for its implementation applied to all organisations, businesses, stakeholders and individuals involved in tourism in the Broads.
- 1.3 As well as updating the strategy to produce a new guide and action plan for 2016-2021 the new document will form the basis for re-application in late February 2016 for the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas. This was first awarded to the Broads in 2006 and again in 2011 and provides a framework for all the Authority's tourism activities working in partnership with other key Broads stakeholders and particularly Broads Tourism, whose constitution refers specifically to the Charter. The Charter is an important quality mark which is also of great value in supporting funding applications.
- 1.4 Much has been achieved through the 2011-2015 strategy particularly in areas such as developing and raising brand awareness, improving quality standards and promoting out of season recreation like the Broads Outdoors Festival. The revised strategy will build on these successes and review the challenges.

2 Process

- 2.1 Following a competitive invitation to tender process The Tourism Company was chosen to carry out the revision of the current strategy, consult with stakeholders and review existing evidence to develop a new strategy. There is a need for an independent consultant to ensure impartiality for all stakeholders and to address a lack of resources within the Communications Team to carry out all the work required. Funding for the progression of the

Strategy was approved by Broad Authority Members, from the Planning Delivery Grant Reserve in July 2015. The Tourism and Promotion Officer will be working closely with the consultants and project managing the work.

- 2.2 As with the current strategy the revised document will be developed through a collaborative and consultative process, initially focusing on key stakeholders before going out to public comment.
- 2.3 It will be developed alongside the Broads Plan ensuring not only that the two complement one another but that information gleaned through the consultative process for the Broads Plan, such as the members' workshop in October, can be used to inform the strategy, and vice versa. The strategy will also help to inform the review of the Authority's planning policies which will take place through the Local Plan review. Opportunities for shared consultation and shared information among the three plans are being taken as opportunities allow.
- 2.4 Close collaboration will take place with Broads Tourism with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Treasurer of Broads Tourism involved in key meetings. Broads Tourism executive members and members as well as Broads Quality charter businesses and Love the Broads members will be consulted through workshop sessions.
- 2.5 The strategy revision will be discussed by Broads Forum and full Authority members in their November meetings and this committee in December. It is anticipated that a draft strategy will be presented to Broads Authority members in January for their approval for it to go out to public consultation. It is hoped the strategy will be adopted by the Broads Authority in March 2016.. A project timetable can be found in Appendix One.

3 How the new strategy will be used

- 3.1 Through initial feedback from stakeholders it has become apparent that there needs to be a greater focus on action and implementation. The new strategy will need to be a shorter, more digestible document and to be accompanied by a Summary document which can act as a quick reference guide to the agreed objectives. This will much more easily enable interested parties to pinpoint how they might be able to get involved in helping to meet the objectives.
- 3.2 To ensure objectives are not forgotten Broads Tourism will be encouraged to use the strategy to define priorities for their members and other stakeholders on an annual basis and develop defined actions as to how these can be implemented, promoting and facilitating where appropriate and reviewing progress regularly. Broads Authority officers will report back on progress annually.

4 Conclusions

- 4.1 A revised Sustainable Tourism Strategy is essential to pinpoint and guide actions in this vital area of the Broads economy for the medium to long term and this will be developed collaboratively and consultatively to ensure everyone with an interest is heard. The process and the resulting document will inform the development of the Broads Plan and vice versa.
- 4.2 Members are asked to note the contents of the report and are invited to comment.

Background Papers: Nil

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Broads Plan Objectives: None

Appendices: APPENDIX 1 - Project timetable

APPENDIX 1

	14 Sep	21 Sep	28 Sep	5 Oct	12 Oct	19 Oct	26 Oct	2 Nov	9 Nov	16 Nov	23 Nov	30 Nov	7 Dec	14 Dec	21 Dec	28 Dec	4 Jan	11 Jan	18 Jan	25 Jan	1 Feb	8 Feb	15 Feb	22 Feb	29 Feb	7 Mar	14 Mar	21 Mar
Inception meeting with Tourism Co																												
Direct consultation/ evidence review																												
Broads Plan members' workshop																												
Stakeholder workshop																												
Interim report																												
Interim report revisions																												
Draft strategy and action plan																												
First draft to BA																												
Public consultation on first draft																												
Final edits/cons statement																												
Adoption by BA																												