

Anti-Social Behaviour
Report by Chief Executive

Summary:	In the last couple of weeks there has been coverage in the press about anti-social behaviour on the Broads. This report is designed to provide a vehicle for Members to discuss this topical issue of concern.
Recommendation:	That the Broads Authority notes the current action taken to prevent and respond to anti-social behaviour.

1 Background

- 1.1 The priority for the Broads Authority has been to manage safety on the waterways to a reasonable level for both private boat owners and visitors to facilitate users to appreciate the special qualities of the National Park and enjoy themselves. The emphasis is not necessarily to increase the total number of visitors but rather to promote the area to a wider audience and retain and maintain the number of private boat owners and visitors to the Broads.
- 1.2 The vast majority of visitors to the Broads National Park have a lovely time and many return year after year. There are always a few visitors and some private boat owners whose behaviour spoils the experience for others, whether it is private boats speeding, hired craft running their engines at moorings in the evening or non-family groups disturbing other users. The Rangers, working closely with Broads Beat police officers, do what they can to both prevent and address these issues. So, for example, Broads Control is given advance notice of single sex parties on hire boats, and Broads Beat officers or a Ranger will where possible provide these hirers with a briefing at the start of their visit highlighting behaviour that might bring them into danger or adversely impact on others.
- 1.3 The Broads is popular for stag and hen occasions, and Members will have seen the pirate and other fancy costumes typical of these parties. At this time of the year there are typically 20-30 single sex groups on the water at the weekend. Most enjoy themselves without causing any nuisance to others. However, typically around 10%, 2-3 per weekend are a problem for other users, local people, the Rangers and Broads Beat and they cause a disproportionate amount of disturbance to other people and time for the Rangers and Broads Beat. Alcohol is often a major factor in influencing behaviour.
- 1.4 Unfortunately, there will always be a minority of people whose behaviour is unacceptable and this is seen ashore in our towns and cities even more than afloat. However, in recent weeks there does appear to be an increase in the

levels of extreme anti-social behaviour and this has been picked up by the press locally and nationally. Although the Broads Authority Rangers will of course assist wherever possible on the water, the prime responsibility for dealing with anti-social behaviour rests with the police.

- 1.5 If any boat hirers or owners come across extreme anti-social behaviour, then they should dial 101 and report it to the police. The Broads Authority has one of the longest partnerships of its type with the Norfolk Constabulary and there is a close working relationship between the Authority's Rangers and the police officers of Broads Beat.
- 1.6 The Broads Authority takes any anti-social behaviour very seriously and will continue to work very closely with the police to deal with this issue.
- 1.7 On the 12th July the Chair and Chief Executive of the Authority met the Chairman and Secretary of the Broads Hire Boat Federation (BHBF), and the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Norfolk and Suffolk Boating Association (NSBA). Three actions were discussed in response to the recent anti-social incidents:
 - 1) All three organisations would encourage boat owners and hirers to contact the police by dialling 101 in the event of encountering severe examples of anti-social behaviour.
 - 2) The BHBF would develop a code of practise for all hire companies in relation to the briefings provided to non-family groups.
 - 3) The hire boat companies would consider raising the deposits required from non-family groups and contributing towards costs incurred by the Broads Authority and the Police for time spent dealing with exceptional anti-social behaviour.
- 1.8 It is hoped that the on-going close cooperation with the police and hire boat companies can prevent these isolated incidents in the future. Members' views on these issues are sought.

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Appendices: none

Background documents: none