

Broads Authority

Broads Local Access Forum

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2014

Please note these draft minutes will be reviewed by the Broads Local Access Forum at its next meeting on 4 March 2015 and may be subject to amendments prior to being confirmed

Present:

Dr Keith Bacon (Chairman)

Mr David Broad
Ms Liz Brooks
Mr Robin Buxton
Mr Mike Flett
Mr Alec Hartley
Mrs Jo Parmenter

Mr Stephen Read
Mr Gary Simons
Mr Charles Swan
Mr Hugh Taylor
Mr Ray Walpole

In Attendance

Mr Kelvin Allen – Broads Authority Member
Mr Will Burchnall – Projects Manager
Ms Lottie Carlton - Administrative Officer
Mr Adrian Clarke – Senior Waterways and Recreation Officer (SWRO)
Mr Mark King – Waterways and Recreation Officer (WRO)
Mrs Andrea Long – Director of Planning and Resources

Also In Attendance

Mr Russell Wilson – Senior Trails Officer, Norfolk County Council

2/1 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Patrick Hacon, Mrs Hattie Llewelyn-Davies, Mr George Saunders and Mr Chris Yardley.

2/2 To receive and confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 10 Sept 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 Sept June 2014 were confirmed as a correct record, subject to the addition of 'carriage drivers' in section 1/4 and signed by the Chairman.

2/3 To receive any points of information arising from the minutes

(1) Minute 1/3 (1) Update on Waveney River Centre Ferry

Regarding cyclists, it was noted that there was potential to include access from Oulton Broad station to the Waveney River Centre and ferry under the Heritage Lottery Fund bid (item 4). Talks were also in progress with Suffolk Wildlife Trust regarding opening access from the station to Carlton Marshes.

(2) Minute 1/3 (3): Staithes – Current information and role of Staithes Management

The Chairman and SWRO had met with Tom Williamson and, subject to a costed brief, there was potential for a project going forward. It was noted that work on staithes could be useful to the Wensum River Corridor Strategy.

(3) Minute 1/3 (4): Hoveton Great Broad Restoration Project

The second part of the Hoveton Great Broad Restoration Project planning application, for canoe access, had been submitted. The Planning Committee would be undertaking a site visit to look at the proposed structures for the application including canoe launch slipways, car park and boardwalks. The application would only consider structures not access issues, but the Broads Authority had indicated a view that there was insufficient public access for the amount of public money being spent on the project and would be having further discussions with the landowner as a result.

(4) Minute 1/3 (6): Integrated Access Strategy Projects Update

Re-piling of 700km length of mooring assets, suggested in the Mooring Strategy, had been accepted by the Broads Authority. This included a reduction at Thorpe River Green and Hoveton viaduct. Since then two Broads Authority moorings had closed at Boundary Farm, Thurne and Thurne Mouth, Thurne due to the landowner not wishing to renew the lease. Further discussions were taking place with the landowner and stakeholders regarding the future of this area.

(5) Minute 1/3 (7): Norwich City Council River Corridor Strategy

A confidential paper was tabled by Alec Hartley highlighting progress of the Wensum River Parkway. Further additions included pre development planning consultations currently ongoing for the Utilities Site and the Ferry Boat Inn (where 42 flats were proposed). The walkway between Carrow Bridge and Trowse Swing Bridge would eventually be opened as a new section of the Wensum River Parkway. The first meeting of the partnership was taking place on 04 December 2014 and it was hoped to publish the strategy in autumn 2015 with the action plan due in Oct/Nov 2015. Some CIL money had already been committed to certain projects.

(6) Minute 1/4: Review of BLAF membership

Tony Howes had resigned his membership of BLAF; unfortunately clashes with other meeting had created difficulties with attendance. He was thanked for his work over the last 10 years. It was noted that there was a gap in angling representation following Nick Larkin leaving two years ago. Mr Kelvin Allen agreed to assist with finding a replacement representative for this

activity. Urban fishing and connections with the Wensum River Parkway were of particular interest currently.

(7) **Minute 1/6: Norfolk County Council Update**

Highways had been invited to the BLAF meeting but couldn't attend.

(8) **Minute 1/7: Sale of Geldeston Woodland and Marsh**

The deadline was in March regarding the potential sale of Geldeston Woodland and Marsh. The River Waveney Trust had expressed interest as had a private individual.

(9) **Minute 1/11 (1):**

A final meeting had taken place with the landowner at Ludham to agree the scope of work required on his land. The Broads Authority's Operations team were scheduled to undertake the work after Christmas ready for completion by spring 2015. It was intended to include a guided walk in the Outdoors Festival. It was confirmed that any change of use of the IDB used compound to a car park for visitors/walkers would need planning permission. Pre-application advice would be useful.

(10) **Minute 1/11 (2):**

There had not been any progress since the completion of a habitat regulation assessment. BA was chasing Natural England about this. It was noted that although BESL were supposed to cut the path north of How Hill this was very overgrown. The SWRO agreed to investigate this problem with BESL.

2/4 Broads Heritage Lottery Fund bid

Mr Will Burchnall, Projects Manager for the Broads Authority, gave a presentation on the Broads Heritage Lottery Fund bid.

Following a large stakeholder meeting at Acle in April, further work had produced a revised project outline and a proposed area for the Landscape Partnership Scheme bid. The first Project Board meeting had taken place (currently education was underrepresented on the Board). Newsletters were keeping stakeholders up to date with progress. Submission of potential projects was taking place with a 2nd January deadline. Submission to HLF was due on the 1st June 2015. A final decision would be known by the end of October 2015.

Comments and answers to questions arose as follows:

- The latest map included more of the Waveney Valley and some upland. It stopped at Wainford Sluice.
- Although a sizeable part of the project area was within Suffolk it had been difficult to get representation for Suffolk on the Board. Mr Hugh Taylor offered to pursue this.

- It was noted that the total bid would be for £2.5million, with cash and in-kind requirements from stakeholders. 20 – 30 projects were envisaged.
- The Broads Authority had committed £150k towards the project over the next 3 years, other partners would decide on their inputs, whether cash or in-kind.
- The first round application required exact costing for the development stage and outline costing for the delivery stage.
- The maximum grant for any one project had not been set yet. Some smaller projects could potentially link into a larger umbrella project. More would be clear once all stakeholder project submissions had been received.
- A link to information and the Project Initiation Documents had been circulated to stakeholders.
- Criteria for projects included interacting with local communities, skills training and education, heritage structures and biodiversity.
- Project submissions would be collated prior to the next Project Board meeting on the 5th February 2015. Links to these would be provided in the next newsletter.
- Newsletters would be circulated to parish and district councils. Grant money would be set aside within the scheme for smaller projects that parishes could apply to.
- Breaking New Ground's access route along the river Chet had been discussed regarding links to proposed projects for the HLF bid.
- Reedham archaeology was under researched. Mrs Jo Parmenter agreed to put together information on a PID form for Mr Will Burchnell.
- Links between Yarmouth, Berney, Breydon were being included in some of the joint BA/Norfolk County Council PIDs being developed. Signage from Yarmouth station was included in this.
- Demonstrations/training could take place in urban areas.

2/5 East of England Local Access Forum Regional Meeting

Unfortunately Mr George Saunders was unavailable to update members and this item would therefore be deferred to the next meeting.

2/6 Rights of Way changes in the draft Deregulation Bill

The SWRO gave presentations updating members on the Rights of Way changes in the draft Deregulation Bill.

Members were reminded that a consultation response had been submitted on behalf of BLAF.

Powers to authorise structures on RoW, other than stock control, had been included in minister's proposals.

A presumption to divert RoW away from mechanised industry had been included. Although this worked easily for farmers who owned the land surrounding the industry concerned, it was not so easy when the surrounding land was privately owned by a third party.

Public footpath orders: a more stringent requirement for long term use and guidelines on what were relevant grounds for appeal were included. The SWRO would review these and report back to members.

Bridleways were protected from downgrading in the draft Bill.

Changes to public path orders: irrelevant objections could now be disregarded.

The SWRO summarised that generally the Bill aimed to tighten up procedures and reduce costs (e.g. there would no longer be a requirement to publish notices ads in local newspapers).

The SWRO agreed to produce a follow up report to BLAF.

Comments and answers to questions arose as follows:

- Further clarity was required regarding when BLAF would be asked to be involved and which sections involved a power rather than a duty.
- It was noted that the Broads Authority's position was not to deal with Public Rights of Way as this was a County Council issue, but rather to concentrate on Permissive Paths.
- Diversion extensions for housing developments came under the Town and Country Planning Act. The developer is required to put a case forward for extinction or diversion of any footpaths to the Planning Authority.

2/7 Norfolk County Council update

Mr Russell Wilson, Senior Trails Officer, Norfolk County Council gave an update to BLAF members.

A link was required from urban areas to the countryside. Norfolk LAF and Broads LAF cooperation would assist with this and a joint meeting was suggested. Potential agenda items to include: Coastal Access, HLF bid, Explore More Coast, Circular routes from the coast inland, Mapping work.

Cycling improvements along the Acle Straight was raised. It was also noted that a cycle route proposal, inland from Yarmouth, was being included in the HLF bid.

It was noted from surveys that 80% of footpath users preferred circular walks and 20% linear routes.

An indicative route had been identified for the new Broadland Way from Rackheath,

maps had been produced and £15k of CIL funding from Broadland District Council secured. Opportunities and threats were being explored for this route. Following this investigations would be made into linking to the Green Link Route and Marriott's Way.

2/8 Accessible Britain Challenge

The Government had produced an Accessible Britain Challenge (ABC) aimed at encouraging communities to be inclusive and accessible. The SWRO and WRO would be undertaking a Broads disabled access audit using the information, guidance and online tool kit provided by the ABC.

The Wensum Riverside Parkway access audit had been completed and could also be used as guidance for a Broads- wide audit.

BLAF members were asked to provide the SWRO with comments on particular areas to look at within the Broads access audit.

It was noted that George Saunders was undertaking an access audit for Norfolk County Council's Trails. Boudicca Way had been completed and the Wherryman's Way would be undertaken next.

Once the Broads audit had been completed Network Rail would be contacted regarding potential access issues at rail crossings e.g. altering the height of telephones, but safety issues were likely to remain their priority.

An issue was highlighted at Valentines Meadow where fencing and kissing gates had been put in by the Broads Authority; these were restricting access. The SWRO agreed to visit the site and investigate this issue further.

2/9 Broads Forum Update

Items discussed at the last Broads Forum meeting had included the National Park branding consultation. It was noted that this was for promotional reasons only and not a legal change of formal name or status of the Broads Authority and that the three purposes remained of equal importance.

The HLF bid had been discussed.

Draft strategic priorities for the Broads Authority were identified and discussed. Links to the HLF bid were advised.

The Forum declared opposition to the amount of public money that was proposed to be spent on Hoveton Great Broad. They viewed the amount of public access linked to the project as insufficient.

2/10 Cycling Delivery Plan consultation

The report outlined the response that had been submitted on behalf of BLAF to the Cycling Delivery Plan consultation that had occurred between meetings.

The Government was committed to a 'cycling revolution' to match efforts having taken place in London to similar efforts in the country as a whole.

It was planned to deal with major strategic plans for cycling networks/facilities.

Local authorities were being asked to register interest for priority funding linked to help and advice for delivery. It wasn't clear if National Park Authorities should apply separately or jointly with Highways Authorities.

Norfolk County Council would be considering the offer via their Committee schedule starting in January 2015.

There was a need to provide safe routes for cyclists around the Broads off main roads and to link this access with being able to take bikes on buses/trains.

The Integrated Access Strategy had identified the lack of provision regarding cycling in the Broads linked to access into the area via public transport and would be progressing this area of work once the canoe trails had been completed. Capital funding could come from the Cycling Delivery Plan, however a steer was needed on the scope regarding application criteria for National Parks and Local Authorities.

The following cycling route ideas/proposals were put forward:

- More quiet lanes routes in the Broads were needed similar to those starting from BeWilderwood and those near the Paston Way.
- There was potential for ferry provision benefitting cyclists at (1) Bungalow Lane, Thorpe; (2) Pontoon bought to run a boat into Norwich from Whitlingham; (3) Cary's Meadow Dyke – Thorpe River Green to Whitlingham Country Park and other areas.
- Abellio had provided storage for 400 bikes at Norwich train station. This Dutch company had not recognised differences in Dutch and English cycling provision and had been surprised these had not been used more. There was potential to link with their aspirations for cycling access.
- Signage/links for cycling access from hub urban areas into the Broads was being included within the HLF bid.
- Cycle hire was being looked at via the Broads Authority visitor hub at Whitlingham.

2/11 Ordnance Survey Maps – Other Routes of Public Access

'Other Public Access' was highlighted on ordnance survey mapping keys as green dots. There were several examples of these in the Broads including: Dilham Broad Lane and several near Horning Common, Ludham Blind Lane to Limes House and Yarmouth north from Bure Park.

Discussion followed regarding the nature of such access and how these linked to historical changes, private tracks and other reasons.

The SWRO and WRO were meeting officials from Ordnance Survey and agreed to ask how these 'other public access' routes were classified.

Mr Russell Wilson agreed to organise site visits and a meeting with the Definitive Map Team, Highways.

2/12 To receive any other items of urgent business

- (1) A potential problem with a proposed re-routing of a public footpath along the river bank at Cess Staithe, Martham was raised. A map was circulated that highlighted the potential route change would cut off public access to the river bank from Cess Road. As a result of the proposals, access to angling could also be compromised. The site had also been identified as a potential canoe portage site by Rangers. Consultations on the proposals were opening and BLAF and the Broads Authority had asked to be included. The SWRO agreed to investigate the potential of a site visit within the consultation period and circulate information to members if this were possible.
- (2) Regarding the National Park branding consultation that Broads Authority had open until the 31st December 2014, BLAF members agreed to respond individually on behalf of their representative organisations rather than submitting a BLAF response.
- (3) A request was made to include a Wensum Forum in the Broads Community Forum schedule. It was noted that these forums were currently under review by Broads Authority regarding format and venues and this request would be forwarded for consideration in the review.
- (4) Network Rail's proposal for a non-raising bridge at Trowse Bridge would block off the historical port of Norwich. Mitigating proposals and facilities provision would be an essential part of any such scheme. The proposal was against everything the Wensum River Parkway was working towards. The SWRO and Mr David Broad agreed to bring an update report to BLAF.
- (5) It was noted that there had been no progress on the harbour revision order. The SWRO agreed to investigate this issue and report back to members.

2/13 To note the date of the next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 04 March 2014 at 2pm.

The meeting concluded at 4.59 p.m.

Chairman