

Navigation Committee

Agenda 04 September 2025

10.00am

Yare House, 62-64 Thorpe Road, Norwich, NR1 1RY

John Packman, Chief Executive – Thursday, 28 August 2025

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations (2014), filming, photographing and making an audio recording of public meetings is permitted. These activities however, must not disrupt the meeting. Further details can be found on the [Filming, photography and recording of public meetings](#) page.

Introduction

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To receive declarations of interest (see [Appendix 1](#) to the Agenda for guidance on your participation having declared an interest in the relevant agenda item)
3. To note whether any items have been proposed as matters of urgent business
4. **To receive and confirm the minutes of the Navigation Committee meeting held on 3 April 2025** (Pages 4 - 16)
5. **Summary of actions and outstanding issues following discussion at previous meetings** (Pages 17 - 19)

Reports for information

6. **Chief Executive's report and current issues** (Pages 20 - 37)
Report by Chief Executive
7. **Annual Income and Expenditure 2024/25** (Pages 38 - 45)
Report by Director of Resources
8. **Navigation income and expenditure 1 April 2025 to 31 July 2025 and 2025/26 forecast outturn** (Pages 46 - 62)
Report by Director of Resources
9. **Construction, Maintenance, and Ecology work programme – progress update** (Pages 63 - 71)
Report by Head of Construction, Maintenance, and Ecology, and Ecology & Design Manager

10. **Water depth specifications** (Pages 72 - 75)
Report by Head of Construction, Maintenance and Ecology
11. **Management of Hickling Broad** (Pages 76 - 89)
Report by Head of Construction, Maintenance, and Ecology
12. **Boat Safety Scheme Compliance** (Pages 90 - 95)
Report by Chief Executive and Head of IT and Collector of Tolls

Other matters

13. Other items of business
Items of business which the chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to section 100B (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972
14. **To note the date of the next meeting – Thursday 6 November 2025 at 10.00am at the King’s Centre, 63-75 King Street, Norwich, NR1 1PH**
15. Exclusion of the public
The Authority is asked to consider exclusion of the public from the meeting under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 for the consideration of the item below on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act as amended, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public benefit in disclosing the information.
16. **Insurance requirements** (Pages 96 - 100)
Report by Chief Executive
17. **Mooring negotiations - update** (Pages 101 – 105)
Report by Chief Executive and Asset Officer

For further information about this meeting please contact the [Governance team](#)

Appendix 1 – Extract from the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct



Navigation Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 03 April 2025

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Please note these are draft minutes and will not be confirmed until the next meeting.

Present

Alan Goodchild – in the Chair (from item 2), Harry Blathwayt, Stephen Bolt, Sue Cadamy, Mark Collins, Peter Dixon, Tony Grayling, Leslie Mogford, Bob Neate, Paul Thomas, and Daniel Thwaites.

In attendance

Matt Dane – Head of Safety Management, Bill Housden – Head of IT and Collector of Tolls (item 9 - 11), Dan Hoare – Head of Construction, Maintenance and Ecology, John Packman - Chief Executive, Rob Rogers - Director of Operations, Lorraine Taylor – Governance Officer.

1. Apologies and welcome

The Chief Executive welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Remus Sawyerr.

Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

The Chief Executive explained that the meeting was being audio-recorded. All recordings remained the copyright of the Broads Authority and anyone wishing to receive a copy should contact the Governance Team. The minutes remained the formal record of the meeting. He added that the law permitted any person to film, record, photograph or use social media in order to report on the proceedings of public meetings of the Authority. This did not extend to live verbal commentary. The Chair needed to be informed if anyone intended to photograph, record or film so that any person under the age of 18 or members of the public not wishing to be filmed or photographed could be accommodated.

2. Appointment of Chair

Alan Goodchild was proposed by Mark Collins and seconded by Peter Dixon.

There being no other nominations Alan Goodchild was appointed Chair of the Navigation Committee for the forthcoming year.

Alan Goodchild took the Chair.

The Chair thanked the committee for having confidence in him to continue as Chair.

3. Appointment of Vice-Chair

Peter Dixon was proposed by Alan Goodchild and seconded by Mark Collins.

There being no other nominations Peter Dixon was appointed Vice-Chair of the Navigation Committee for the forthcoming year.

The Chair welcomed Sue Cadamy to her first meeting as a co-opted Member to the Navigation Committee.

The Chair reminded members to respond to meeting invites so that Officers can ensure that the meeting was quorate.

4. Declarations of interest

Members indicated they had no further declarations of interest other than those already registered.

5. Matters of urgent business

No items were proposed as a matter of urgent business.

6. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2025 were signed by the Chair as a correct record of the meeting.

7. Summary of actions and outstanding issues following discussions at previous meetings

Members received a report summarising the progress of issues that had recently been presented to the Committee. The Chief Executive (CE) said that there was some good news to report on the Appeal under Section 31 Harbours Act 1964. The CE said that on 11 October 2023, the Broads Hire Boat Federation raised an objection with the Secretary of State for Transport in relation to the charges levelled by the Broads Authority under the right of objection provided by Section 31 of the Harbours Act 1964. The CE said that he was pleased to report that the Secretary of State had decided to rule in favour of the Broads Authority, and had upheld the charges for the financial year 2023/24.

8. Appointment of two co-opted members to the Broads Authority

Members were asked to recommend the appointment of two co-opted members to the Broads Authority until 15 May 2026 as set out in Section 1(2)(c) of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 as amended. The Chief Executive (CE) explained that given that Alan Goodchild had been appointed Chair of the Navigation Committee, he would automatically take up one of those appointments. This, therefore, left one vacancy that needed to be filled.

Alan Goodchild proposed and Mark Collins seconded that Peter Dixon be appointed as a member of the Broads Authority until 15 May 2026. No other nominations were received.

It was resolved that Alan Goodchild and Peter Dixon be recommended to the Broads Authority for appointment as the co-opted members to the Broads Authority until 15 May 2026.

9. Abandoned and sunken vessels and financial implications

Members received the report of the Director of Operations (DO). The DO said that the paper before Members was a detailed explanation on how the Authority currently dealt with abandoned vessels and the costs associated with recovery of those vessels. The DO asked for

Members' comments on a potential amnesty/buy-back scheme and finding ways to mitigate the cost of removal from the navigation area. Once a vessel had sunk, the recovery was significantly more expensive and time consuming.

A Member commented that he thought that it was an excellent idea to provide incentives for people to bring their boats in and have them scrapped, and asked whether the DO could elaborate on what would happen to the various constituent parts of a boat once it had been handed over and scrapped and whether there was any possibility of making use of the waste materials. The DO said that at present, once the vessels came back to the special compound at the Dockyard, most of them would be crushed and go into landfill, however, anything that was of value was salvaged. The proposed scheme would need to be developed further so that when a boat was surrendered to the Authority more parts could be salvaged and sold at boat jumble sales. The DO said that as far as he was aware, there was no current recycling scheme that included material such as fibreglass salvaged from boats. The Head of Construction, Maintenance and Ecology (HCME) said that if any vessels that were surrendered to the Authority were sound and sailable, then they would be sold through sealed bids and the vessels would, therefore, remain in service and avoid the waste issue. However, those vessels that were at the end of their life, all salvageable items would be removed and the parts left, such as fibreglass, would go into landfill as there was no current recycling option.

A Member commented that if he did not pay the tax on his car the car could be seized, and asked whether there was anything that the Broads Authority could do in terms of the ability to seize boats that were not tolled, insured or compliant with the Boat Safety Scheme. The Member said that if the Authority was able to do that, it would be possible to remove boats before they became a problem and that it would not cost the Authority as much to deal with disposal. The DO said that the Broads Authority did not have the powers to impound vessels if the owner had not paid the tolls etc., and there was a process to pursue the non-payment of tolls through other means. The DO added that the only way that the Authority could seize vessels was that if they were deemed to be unsafe. The Chief Executive (CE) said that if someone had not paid their toll, the Authority did chase them and ultimately would take them to court, however, it took a lot of time and effort chasing non-payers which resulted in a huge cost to the Authority. The Head of IT and Collector of Tolls (HITCT) explained that last year he received 1,708 notices of vessels that were not compliant with registration bylaws, predominantly non-payment of tolls. If there was an identifiable owner, in most cases the tolls were eventually paid, however, some got taken to court. If there was not an identifiable owner, the Authority did have the abandoned vessel route to explore. The HITCT said that non-payment of tolls was a big part of the Tolls Team's time and said that in 2024 over 1,000 letters were sent out to owners of boats who had not paid their tolls, compared to just a few years ago when 300-400 notices of non-compliant vessels were received each year.

A Member said that getting rid of an old boat where there wasn't the ability to sell it was a big problem and asked whether the Authority risked being inundated with boats to dispose of and was there a way that the scheme could be phased. The DO said that the proposed scheme would be for private users only and not for commercial users. He added that the scheme would have to be discretionary and the Authority would have the right to not take a boat. The

DO said that if the scheme became popular, the Authority could put a waiting list in place to reduce strain on the Dockyard staff.

A Member commented that he was concerned that private boat owners, who could afford to scrap their own boat, would take advantage of the scheme, and was glad to note that the scheme would be discretionary.

A Member commented that the recent cost to the Broads Authority to raise sunken boats was quite staggering. The DO said that many sunken boats were dealt with by the Rangers at a relatively small cost to the Authority, however, the two vessels that were being dealt with at the moment required a five-person dive team with lots of safety back-up. This all came at a significant cost to the Authority. The DO gave an example of the sunken vessel at Polkey's Mill and said that because the person who owned the vessel lived aboard, there were lots of possessions onboard which were now in the water and the divers risked being entangled. This meant that there was a lot of work required to make the vessel safe before it could be raised.

A Member commented that the scheme was a great idea, and any improvement to safety was a positive step and thought that there might be an opportunity for companies to offer a breakage and recycling service. The DO said that anyone who owned a boat would know that they needed to look for an odd part, and the Broads Authority would therefore take more care during the salvage to preserve parts that could be resold.

The Chair said it was an excellent idea and thought that the Authority should look at introducing the scheme.

10. Report on Surveys by Rangers 2024

Members received the report of the Head of Safety Management (HSM). The HSM said that the report provided an update on the surveys carried out by the Ranger Team during 2024 covering all hire craft including paddleboards and motor craft. The HSM said that following the reduction in the Ranger Team there would be some changes for 2025 in that the surveys would take place at the Tourist Information Centres. In addition, a leaflet would be produced with a QR code that enabled the hirers to complete the survey online.

The HSM said that the 2024 survey highlighted that there were still some hirers who had not received a proper handover and others had received no information on alcohol consumption around boats.

A Member said that he was concerned that some paddleboard hire companies were not providing proper handovers and asked why hire boat companies were required to carry out proper handovers, but paddleboard companies were not. The HSM said that the Hire Boat Licencing Offer had been briefed to visit all paddleboard hirers this season. The Director of Operations (DO) said that both Rangers and the Hire Boat Licencing Officer would be required to do far more spot checks on paddleboard hire companies which would highlight those that were not doing show outs and trials.

A Member asked whether, although the Broads Authority could not enforce the wearing of life jackets and buoyancy aids when aboard a hire craft, there was some way that this could be mandated through the licencing rules for hire boat companies. The DO said that this was an issue and pointed out that the deaths that had occurred on the Broads in 2024 would have all been preventable if a life jacket had been worn, however, it would be difficult to police any requirement to wear a life jacket or buoyancy aid. The DO said that the Authority's messaging this year would be stronger warning of the dangers of not wearing a life jacket. The Rangers regularly stop people and speak to them if they see that they were not wearing a life jacket, especially if there were children present on the boat. The Member asked whether it could be made a condition of hire. A Member said that to hire a boat, the hirer must watch a safety video before they can take a boat out, life jackets were issued and the hirer shown how to use them.

A Member asked whether there were there any statistics showing near misses etc. in relation to paddle sports, and how great was the hazard and risk to users. The DO said that most near misses were not reported to the Broads Authority. The DO said that the risks differed to those of other craft on the Broads, however, paddle sports did have their place and were a very important introduction to the Broads for many users. A discussion was had about pop-up paddleboard hire companies and the issues surrounding life jackets. Some Members were concerned that they had seen some paddleboard companies not providing buoyancy aids for customers, however, other Members reported that some pop-ups did have buoyancy aids available. A Member said that there were many private boat owners that did not wear life jackets. The DO said that the Authority understood the issue and was addressing it where possible.

A Member said that paddleboarding was a good activity for getting young people on the Broads and the activity should not be discouraged.

11. Chief Executive's report and current issues

Members received the report of the Chief Executive (CE). The CE said that there were two main issues to discuss from the paper in front of Members:

Online tolls system.

The CE said that there had been a big risk for the Broads Authority in that the existing tolls system was no longer able to be maintained. Therefore, the Head of IT and Collector of Tolls (HITCT) and the IT Project Officer, Steve Linford, spent a lot of time over the last year, working with a private contractor to get a new system in place. This had been implemented in time for the new season and was working well and that, as at 31 March, there had been a 26% increase in people paying their toll online which had saved a large amount of administrative time and cost.

The CE said that he would welcome Members' views on the proposed offer of staged payments for an initial trial period. The CE reminded Members that this had been discussed a couple of years prior and it had been identified that staged payments were quite difficult for the Authority to undertake in that the payment of tolls was a seasonal activity. It was not

possible, however, to make a comparison with that of the payment of car tax – car tax was a 12-month charge, whereas toll payment was a 28-day charge. In addition, the CE said that there had been a significant increase in those defaulting on payment and added that where people approach the Authority who were clearly in financial hardship and were struggling to pay their toll, the Authority would work with them to help resolve the issue.

The difficulty of staged payments were two-fold: first, it was more costly to provide this service; and second, when staged payments had been offered in the past, a number of people had defaulted after the first payment which meant that the Authority had to chase for the subsequent payments, again at a cost. The proposal was to offer staged payments, but would add a £25 administrative fee to cover costs.

The HITCT said that in 2024 the Authority received 118 requests to pay in three instalments in April, May and June. Of those requests, 44% of were either paid late or defaulted. Therefore, in addition to having to process the payment three times on the Authority's system, there was a lot of work chasing for payment via phone calls and letters being sent at additional cost to the Authority. The HITCT added that over 98% of people paid their toll on time and in one go, but believed that the Authority should be covering costs for the extra work and costs involved in the provision of staged payments.

The HITCT reported that there was a growing trend from some, not to pay their toll until they had received a Notice of Contravention from the Rangers. Some paid on receipt of the Notice of Contravention, however, in some cases a letter was then sent by the Tolls Team giving them 10 days to pay. If that letter was not successful, a second letter would be sent. In 2024 seventy cases had been sent to the Solicitor for a summons to be issued, at a cost of £140 per case, many of which were resolved out of court. The HITCT proposed that anyone who received a Notice of Contravention was charged a 'late payment charge' of £25 to cover the administration costs. Prosecutions had become a major part of the Collector of Tolls work each year and it was therefore thought that those owners who did pay their tolls should not have to subsidise those who did not.

A Member asked whether the Authority could inform the public through the Broadcaster magazine or similar, about what happened if they did not pay their tolls, i.e. the charges involved and the outcome if taken to court. This might deter those that thought that they could get away with not paying their tolls.

A Member commented that in his view, tolls for private boat owners were not unreasonable and that they should be paid upfront. The Member was not sympathetic to those who tried to play the system and thought that toll payers should not have to foot the bill of those who had not paid and that any costs incurred should be clawed back, however, thought that staged payments should not be offered except in particular cases of hardship.

A Member said that although he agreed with the Member's comments above it should be noted that boating should not be an elitest activity and it was for everyone. The Member was pleased that the Broads Authority was making provision so that everybody had a chance to be a boater.

A Member asked for clarification on the 28-day charge. The HITCT said that this was part of the Schedule of Tolls which set out two types of toll: a short visit toll which offered a period of between 7 and up to 28 days; and an annual toll which applied to any vessel which had been on the Broads for more than 28 days in one season.

A Member said that hire boat yards did have staged payments, however, there was a vast difference between hire boat yards and private owners in that a hire boat yard was very unlikely to default. The Member also felt aggrieved that people were playing the system and pointed out that a boat was a luxury item, and commented that those that did pay their tolls should not have to subsidise those who did not and supported the HITCT's proposal to introduce a late payment charge.

A Member commented that administration fees were reasonable, for example, if a person paid their insurance over time, it would cost more than if paid in full up front. The Member asked whether the HITCT had considered the use of Direct Debit to collect the tolls. The HITCT said that it was something that had been considered. Direct Debit had been used in the past when the Authority issued parking permits at Whitlingham, however, there were a number of people who defaulted or cancelled their payment. If the Authority were to introduce Direct Debit payments once a year for the entirety of the toll due, notifications would need to be sent out to inform the boat owner that the payment was due to be taken, the money then would be taken. However, if it was not possible to take the money, the Authority would have to look into other means of payment, all of which would come at a cost. At present, the Authority was quite fortunate in that, now it was easy to sign up to pay online, people were paying their tolls without any additional work or administration by the Tolls Team. The CE said that there were two reasons why the Management Team were reluctant to use Direct Debit for payments: the first because of defaults; and second because of the amount of administration that was required.

A Member asked whether the 28 day toll was tied up within the Broads Act. The HITCT said that it was not in the Act but had been in practice since the days of the Port and it was within the bylaws if a boat was kept for more than 28 days the boat must be registered. The HITCT said that he believed that the basic principal had been in place since the 2nd World War – it was not something that the Broads Authority had introduced, it was something that was inherited.

A Member said that he would like to see a £50 charge for a Notice of Contravention. A Member said that he would agree with that figure.

The Chair thanked Members for their input.

National Park Grant

The CE said that he had received a letter from Defra on 2 April with details of the National Park Grant for 2025/26. The CE said that Defra would be cutting the Broads Authority's revenue by 8.2% which amounted to £280,000, however, the Authority would get an additional £1.4m Capital Grant which had to be spent by 31 March 2026.

On Monday 31 March, the Chief Executives of the ten English National Parks met the Secretary of State and Minister. The Ministers were hoping that by giving National Parks capital funding, it would enable them to generate a revenue stream which would offset the loss of the revenue cut from the National Park Grant. The CE said that the Broads Authority owned very little land, most of which was in the flood plain, and therefore the ability to use capital to generate income was very limited. The CE asked Members if they had any ideas about how the £1.4m could be spent to generate income to offset a reduction in revenue of £280,000 a year, he would be delighted to receive them.

The CE said that the reduction in revenue would have a big impact on the services the Broads Authority could deliver. He was worried about the outcome of three-year spending review and potential further cuts on top of the new lower baseline figure. The DF would present a revised budget at the next Broads Authority meeting on 9 May.

In terms of navigation, it was not clear what implications this reduction in National Park revenue would have on the navigation budget and a revised budget might need to be brought back to committee at the next meeting. The CE said that the other element that he was pursuing with the Government was how the Authority used the capital money. The CE said that he was seeking approval for the Authority to spend some National Park capital funding where there was a benefit for users of the navigation. The CE said that he did not know what that might be, but it could include projects such as the delayed piling work at Potter Heigham and Repps Bank.

The CE said that the reason why the DF was not able to attend the Navigation Committee meeting was because she was on a training course being run by CIPFA about the definitions of capital and revenue. The Management Team had consulted KPMG and the advice received from them was that if the Authority had a long-term lease on a mooring and it was repiled which extended its life by another 25 years, this expenditure could be capitalised. The CE said that the challenge was to get Defra to agree that the Authority could spend National Park capital money on the enhancement of moorings by arguing that it met the second purpose National Park function of promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Broads. The CE said that he had always believed that navigation fitted under that purpose as it was one of the main ways that people enjoyed visiting the Broads – there were no extensive footpaths for people to use, instead there were waterways with boats on them. Therefore, the CE was trying to justify back to Defra that the Authority could spend that National Park capital on a National Park expenditure that delivered better access for people visiting the Broads.

The CE said that the letter from Defra set out the criteria for eligible capital spend which was divided into two streams: “activities may be directed towards innovation, investing to save, and income generation or delivery of 30 by 30.” The CE said that it was very difficult for the Broads Authority to spend huge amounts of capital money to deliver any of those requirements, therefore, he intended to go back to Defra to say that the Broads was a special place and the Authority wanted to spend some of the capital money on improving things for access to the Broads, specifically pontoons, enhancement of moorings and some of the

projects that had been put on hold for some time and were struggling to fund out of the toll income.

A Member said that it was important that access for the disabled and for diversity should be built into the argument when making the case to Defra.

A Member said that the line between navigation and National Park was, to a large degree, false and did not think that the Broads Authority should be apologetic in this thinking. There was a climate and biodiversity crisis which was affecting the Broads and it was home to a very large proportion of the UK's biodiversity and the maintenance of the navigation was fundamental to ensure the long-term future of biodiversity.

A Member asked whether the Authority was in a permanent position where income from tolls would be higher than the funding from Defra. The CE said that, in terms of the pie-chart for Broads Authority income, the area of income with most growth had been external funding. The work that the Partnership and External Funding Manager had been doing on the Landscape Connections scheme could potentially bring in £10m to the Broads.

A Member commented that the CE had requested input and advice from Members, and asked whether the CE had sufficient mechanisms in place to get the same from the boat owning community given the great importance of the money that they were putting into the Broads for its maintenance. The CE said that he thought there was more work to be done with the NSBA and other organisations.

A Member said that without dredging and other maintenance, the Broads would be a different landscape and it was the boat owners who paid for this work. Boats were essential to the future of the Broads and the science had already made the argument that maintenance of the navigation was a National Park purpose. The CE agreed and said that he was making the argument to Defra that using the National Park capital grant to support some of the activities which had traditionally been seen as purely navigation was reasonable and legal.

The CE said that there was a two-stage process, the first was the letter that had already been received, and the second crucial part was the Grant Agreement which would provide more detail on how the money could be spent.

A Member commented that, rather than spending money piling riverbanks to provide 24-hour moorings, the Authority would be better off to provide pontoons as these would provide a benefit for access and were much safer. The CE said that he agreed and that he hoped that this would be possible using some of the capital funding. The Chair agreed and said that pontoons provided a lot of benefits. It was non-slip surface, it would overcome the issue of the transfer of aggregate onto decks, and would rise and fall with the water level.

12. Income and Expenditure

Members received the report of the Director of Finance (DF). The Chief Executive (CE) said that the DF was unable to attend the meeting and therefore the CE would provide an update prepared by the DF. The CE referred Members to table 1 on page 45 of the papers. At the end

of February the actual net favourable variance had increased to £342,364 which was an increase of £53,000 compared to January. This was in part due to the variance on practical maintenance that had increased by £76,000 due to the delayed mooring works and had been offset by some timing differences which included the dredging surveys that came in ahead of profile. There were no changes to latest available budget set out in table 2 on page 47 of the papers, or the forecast set out in table 3 on page 48. The earmarked reserves had decreased by £7,966 to £1,368,038, however, these would reduce further in the March figures once the works at Mutford Lock had been invoiced.

A Member asked whether the work to Mutford Lock had come in on budget. The Head of Construction, Maintenance and Ecology (HCME) said that it had not only come in under budget but had also been completed ahead of schedule.

13. Construction, Maintenance and Ecology work programme – progress update

Members received the report of the Head of Construction, Maintenance and Ecology (HCME). The HCME said that the dredging progress was ongoing and that the year-end figures would be provided at the next meeting of the Navigation Committee in June. Over the winter, the timber capping, mooring posts, and path material had been replaced at North Cove moorings and a section of timber replaced on the upstream section at Cantley mooring.

The HCME said that the riverside tree management work had been completed for the winter 2024/25 programme and that the full five-year programme was on track.

The HCME said that work had been planned to remove the redundant timbers at Turntide Jetty and that would happen in the next few weeks. Part of the jetty had been repiled in 2015, however, the timbers on the end of the jetty had become a safety hazard to navigation. Once the work had been completed, a review of the marker posts would be carried out.

The HCME referred Members to Appendix 2 of the report and explained that this set out all of the operational staff time for 2025/26 and the allocation of time for both navigation and National Park work carried out. Operational staff time was now split with 60% of time spent on navigation and 40% spent on National Park duties. The HCME highlighted the 'Other navigation works' entry and said that this would include removal of wrecks and added that the more work the operations staff were doing on that, the less they would be able to do on other planned work.

A Member noted that in section 2.3 of the report it mentioned that crushed aggregate had been used for topping up moorings, and asked whether there would be any moorings where wood chip would continue to be used, and why the Authority had moved to using aggregate. The HCME said that the Authority used type 1 granite which had larger chunks of material mixed with smaller pieces which helped the material compact to make a safe and even surface. There were a number of reasons why crushed aggregate was used, part of which was due to the public risk assessment that Rangers performed on each site. Crushed aggregate provided a firmer and much safer base, and was a more resilient, cheaper and longer-lasting

surface that required less maintenance. The Chair asked whether the Authority had considered shingle mats. The HCME said that there was one at a mooring on Cockshoot Broad and it had not performed as well as was hoped. It was costly to maintain and had become a slippery surface.

A Member asked whether the Authority was achieving the productivity that was expected on dredging. The HCME said that the scope of dredging work changed during the year. For example, 2,870m³ planned at Bridge Broad was pulled from the programme due to a change of landowner and lease. In addition, in some areas on the River Bure there was not the sediment build-up that was initially thought so these areas were not dredged and the sediment that was present was not able to be removed.

A Member said that he thought that there would be a review of navigation system dredging and asked what the timing was on that piece of work. The Director of Operations (DO) said that this had been tabled for later in the year.

14. 2024/25 Health and Safety Review and internal audit recommendations

Members received the report of the Head of Safety Management (HSM). The HSM said that the following detailed analysis of health and safety statistics received, the conclusion was that the Broads was a safe and tranquil environment and reported incidents were low when considered against the high number of visitors who enjoyed the waterways. With the water environment and the risks that tidal waters posed, there would be, on occasion, tragedies that occurred. The HSM said that, of the seven reported fatalities in 2024, two were heart attacks and four were drownings through inadvertently entering the water. The common factor in all the drowning cases was the lack of a personal floatation device being worn. The highest reported incidents in the Broads for 2024 was inadvertent entering of the water. The HCME said that the report in front of Members contained a number of actions which included the Hire Boat Licencing Officer working with hire boat yards on the use of life jackets, and also to reinforce the safety message around the importance of wearing life jacket when mooring and moving around a vessel. Signage had been produced by the Communications team for Great Yarmouth Yacht Station together with leaflets which highlighted the incidents that had taken place in 2024 as well as the importance of wearing life jackets whilst on the Broads.

A Member asked whether the recent reports of sewage leaks in the Broads was a concern for health and safety. The Director of Operations (DO) confirmed that no sewage-related reports of ill-health had been received and the Authority's advice remained for people not to enter the water.

A Member asked whether safety had improved over the years. The HSM said that the statistics went back over 20 years and the figures did fluctuate. The DO said that every year the safety committee looked at the trends and trips, slips and falls remained the number one

incident on the Broads. The DO did not think that it would get to the point where there were no accidents, but reiterated that the Broads was a safe place to be.

A Member said that the private boats were not as heavily regulated as hire boat companies and there was nothing to stop private boat owners making the choice not to wear life jackets and this could reflect in the statistics.

A Member asked whether the Authority looked at the 'Don't drink and drown' campaign. The CE said that the Head of Communications was looking into that. The DO said that there was a need to target the messaging especially in relation to life jackets.

15. Oulton Broad Power Boat racing dates for 2025

Members received the report of the Head of Safety Management (HSM). The HSM said that some of the events did not run in 2024 due to weather conditions and availability of officials. There were very few incidents, all of which were dealt with swiftly.

16. Committee timetable of meetings 2025/26

Members received the report of the Senior Governance Officer. The Chief Executive (CE) said that this was the timetable for all committee meetings across the Authority for 2025/26.

The Chair asked Members to note the dates and reiterated that Member respond to calendar invites when they were sent out.

A Member asked whether the Navigation Committee members have another meeting to discuss the various items which the Members would like to see on the agenda for future committee meetings. The CE said that this could be arranged to follow a future Navigation Committee meeting.

17. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Navigation Committee would be held on Thursday 5 June 2025 at Yare House, 622-64 Thorpe Road, Norwich, NR1 1RY commencing at 10am.

The meeting ended at 11:45am

Signed

Chairman

Navigation Committee

04 September 2025
Agenda item number 5

Summary of actions and outstanding issues following discussions at previous meetings

| Title | Meeting date | Lead officer | Summary of actions | Progress so far | Target date |
|---|--------------|--------------|--|--|-------------|
| Network Rail Swing Bridge £10 million refurbishment programme | 19/10/2017 | John Packman | Network Rail Whole Life Strategy planning for swing bridges. | <p>Historical updates (October 2019 to April 2024) have been removed. All historical updates can be found in previous versions of the Summary of Actions and Outstanding Issues available via the committee papers on the Broads Authority website.</p> <p>April 2024: Network Rail confirmed that the work to the Somerleyton and Reedham swing bridges was complete. Work included extensive brickwork repairs to reinforce the control boxes, a full upgrade to the electrical system, a full upgrade and replacement of the manual winch system to enable the bridge to be swung open manually by the bridge operator if there was a problem with the machinery, and replacement of the navigation lights. What was not clear was whether, as part of the scheme, the lifting equipment and jacks within the control box had been completed and the Authority was waiting to receive confirmation from Network Rail.</p> <p>Network Rail had been unable to go ahead with the Oulton swing bridge repairs as they were more substantial than first thought.</p> <p>May 2024: Network Rail have confirmed that they are continuing to look at ways in which, in the long term, they might be able to address the issue of the two Swing Bridge thermally expanding and not being operable in very hot weather. However, these are likely to entail structural works and will require additional funding, so they do not currently have a timeline for this.</p> <p>For the time being, they have instead undertaken a smaller, though still significant, set of works. Together with a consistent maintenance regime, these will prevent the bridges from deteriorating and make failures less likely.</p> <p>June 2024: As agreed in Navigation Committee meeting on 06/06/2024, historic updates have been removed up until April 2024 updates.</p> <p>August 2025: No updates to report.</p> | |

| Title | Meeting date | Lead officer | Summary of actions | Progress so far | Target date |
|---|--------------|--------------|---|--|-------------|
| Carrow Road Bridge Repairs | 15/04/2021 | John Packman | Briefing provided at Navigation Committee meeting in April 2021, outlining Norfolk County Council's proposals for the repair of Carrow Road bridge. Further information is awaited from the County Council. | <p>Historical updates (October 2019 to April 2024) have been removed. All historical updates can be found in previous versions of the Summary of Actions and Outstanding Issues available via the committee papers on the Broads Authority website.</p> <p>April 2024: It is understood that some repairs have been carried out and the bridge was fit for purpose at present.</p> <p>June 2024: As agreed in Navigation Committee meeting on 06/06/2024, historic updates have been removed up until April 2024 updates.</p> <p>August 2024: Norfolk County Council reported that repairs were due to take place to the Bridge on 22 August 2024.</p> <p>September 2024: The council carried out urgent repairs to the surface of the road.</p> <p>August 2025: Repairs were undertaken to the timber decking following an inspection which identified some defects in the bridge's timber.</p> | 10/06/2021 |
| Funding the waterways of the Broads National Park | 11/01/2024 | John Packman | To track the progress on making the case for central Government funding to support the maintenance of the Broads waterways. | <p>January 2024: The paper was presented to the committee on 11 Jan. 2024 and received unanimous support to endorse the paper for adoption by the Broads Authority. On 26 January 2024, the Broads Authority unanimously endorsed the paper and supported the Chair in writing to the Secretary of State for the Environment.</p> <p>March 2024: Funding paper sent to the Minister and a response received on 18 March.</p> <p>April 2024: As reported at the Navigation Committee on 11 April 2024, the Minister confirmed that the Government remained committed to supporting the vital role Protected Landscapes play in protecting our precious wildlife, and the importance they have for tourism, the regional economy, and public access. The Minister was optimistic that a more sustainable funding model for our Protected Landscapes could be developed.</p> <p>June 2024: As discussed at the Navigation Committee meeting held on 6 June 2024, the Chair would write to the Minister again following the General Election.</p> <p>August 2024: Broads Authority Chair has written to the new Minister.</p> <p>November 2024: No reply received from the Minister, however, the Chair and Chief Executive are trying to set up a meeting with the Minister in the near future to discuss the issue face-to-face.</p> <p>March 2025: No response to date. Officers raised the matter on 13 January as part of the Defra Annual Review.</p> <p>August 2025: Defra has provided the Authority with flexibility in the use of National Park capital funding. The Change Control Notice stated the following:</p> | |

| Title | Meeting date | Lead officer | Summary of actions | Progress so far | Target date |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|---|--|-------------|
| | | | | <p>“The capital grant and any income derived from the expenditure is to be treated as National Park income and must be used in furtherance of section 2(1)(a) and (b) of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988. Any such income may be applied to an expenditure that incidentally supports Section 2(1)(c) provided the primary aim of the expenditure remains the pursuit of Section 2(1)(a) and (b)’’.</p> <p>Section 2(1) (b) of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act states: <i>It shall be the general duty of the Authority to manage the Broads for the purposes of: (b) promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Broads by the public.</i></p> <p>The argument accepted by Defra is that improving access to and from the water is one of the main ways the public enjoy the special qualities of the Broads.</p> | |
| Haven Bridge | 06/06/2024 | John Packman | <p>The Great Yarmouth Ports Leisure Users meeting on 2 April had a long discussion regarding the problems with the Haven Bridge. There is a dispute between Peel Ports and Norfolk County Council regarding opening the bridge which is having an adverse impact on commercial and private boat owners based in the Broads.</p> | <p>June 2024: The Chief Executive has been in touch with the CEO at Norfolk County Council to help facilitate a way forward between the two parties - Norfolk County Council and Peel Ports.</p> <p>July 2024: Temporary arrangements agreed by Peel Ports and Norfolk County Council have allowed the bridge to open. The Monitoring Officer has written to the Great Yarmouth Port Authority reminding it of its statutory duties.</p> <p>August 2024: Response received from Great Yarmouth Port Authority and meeting to be arranged to discuss Haven Bridge.</p> <p>September 2024: Great Yarmouth Port Authority wrote to the Chief Executive to defer the meeting until they have had their AGM on 18 September.</p> <p>November 2024: Meeting with users on lifting arrangements. Peel Ports proposed that charges be introduced for lifting the bridge and the Port Users Group would formulate a response to that proposal.</p> <p>January 2025: A letter, dated 19 December 2024, had been sent to the Port Users Group from Great Yarmouth Port Authority which indicated that the proposed lift charge would not be applied for 2025. The wider issue of the operation of the bridge and its lifting remained outstanding.</p> <p>March 2025: The Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer met with Peel Ports on 19 February and covered a range of issues.</p> <p>August 2025: No further update.</p> | |

Date of report: 20 August 2025

Navigation Committee

04 September 2025

Agenda item number 6

Chief Executive's report and current issues

Report by Chief Executive

Purpose

To provide a briefing on significant matters relating to the maintenance and management of the waterways.

Broads Plan context

All strategic actions under Theme C: Maintaining and enhancing the navigation.

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1. Accident at Oulton Broad

- 1.1. Members will be aware of an incident during the powerboat racing at Oulton Broad on Thursday 24 July 2025 which resulted in the death of one of the competitors. East Suffolk Council (ESC) is carrying out an investigation and the Authority has taken the decision to suspend racing while we await the outcome of this. No timescale has yet been given, but officers from the Authority have been in contact with ESC over this.

2. National Park Capital Programme

- 2.1. The Authority has been allocated £1.3 million of capital funding, and Table 1 below shows the progress made to date.
- 2.2. Critically Defra has provided the Authority with flexibility in the use of National Park capital funding.
- 2.3. The Change Control Notice states the following:

“The capital grant and any income derived from the expenditure is to be treated as National Park income and must be used in furtherance of section 2(1)(a) and (b) of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988. Any such income may be applied to an expenditure that incidentally supports Section 2(1)(c) provided the primary aim of the expenditure remains the pursuit of Section 2(1)(a) and (b)”.

- 2.4. Section 2(1) (b) of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act states:

*It shall be the general duty of the Authority to manage the Broads for the purposes of—
(b) promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Broads by the public;*

- 2.5. The argument accepted by Defra is that improving access to and from the water is one of the main ways the public enjoy the special qualities of the Broads.

Table 1: National Park Capital Programme 2025/26

| Project | Priority | Indicative cost | Progress |
|---|----------|-----------------|--|
| Purchase of land | 1 | Confidential | |
| Acle Bridge enhancement | 2 | £95,000 | PID produced and kick-off meeting set in June. Sharepoint site set up |
| Improvements to Great Yarmouth Yacht Station - showers etc. | 2 | £50,000 | Waiting for the lease to be sorted + might need larger amount than 50K |
| Pontoons to improve access to the water | 2 | £175,000 | PID produced, kick-off meeting held and project board |

| | | | |
|---|---|----------|--|
| | | | established. Sharepoint site set up |
| Upgrade 40 electric charging pillars | 2 | £30,000 | PID produced and kick-off meeting to be set in June |
| Dockyard solar | 2 | £50,000 | Two phase approach. Structural engineer report by end July. Open tender for solar scheme by end August |
| Truxor attachments | 3 | £10,000 | Waiver approval and order by end July |
| Fen Harvester with double chop head | 3 | £205,000 | Waiver approval and order by end July |
| Electric telehandler | 3 | £90,000 | Open tender for procurement by end August |
| Nato floats (x4) | 4 | £40,000 | Open tender for procurement by end August |
| 22t Long reach excavator and mats | 4 | £180,000 | Open tender for procurement by end August |
| Mowing equipment to manage conservation and visitor sites | 4 | £120,000 | Outside current budget. Quotes received as a guide. |
| RESERVE LIST | | | |
| Water quality monitoring equipment | 4 | £30,000 | Outside current budget. Quotes received as a guide. |
| Dockyard enhancement | 5 | £200,000 | Outside current budget. |
| Review and upgrade EV chargers | 5 | £25,000 | Outside current budget. Anglia Car Charging have quoted for these works already |
| New electric pool vehicles x 2 | 5 | £60,000 | Outside current budget. |

3. Update on General Direction

3.1. The consultation period for the General Direction, restricting the size of vessels entering the Broads completed at the end of February. There were no objections made, so the Authority can now proceed with the General Direction. Information for larger vessels wishing to enter the Broads will be added to the website shortly. In the meantime, vessel owners can contact Broads Control for further information.

4. Navigation patrolling and performance targets

4.1. Appendix 1 sets out the Ranger exercise of powers for the 2024-25 year, with Appendix 2 setting out the Ranger duties for the same period. As expected, the figures for verbal and written warnings are down on the previous two years, which is due to fewer vessels being out on the water. There have however been a higher number of more serious and repeat offences which has resulted in more cases going to court.

- 4.2. Last year we introduced a new system for reporting Ranger's location which was also used to capture where the verbal and written warnings (Memorandum of Navigational Warning) were issued as well as where Notices of Contravention, Special Directions were issued and hazards found. The spatial data is set out in Appendix 6. Collecting the data spatially will help us keep under review where Ranger patrols are targeted to.

5. Sunken and abandoned vessel update

- 5.1. The sunken and abandoned vessel table is set out in Appendix 3. We have continued to work with owners where possible to raise sunken vessels. The most notable vessels removed since the last meeting is the two vessels on the lower Yare which have now been recovered to the Dockyard.

6. Planning enforcement update

- 6.1. There are no further enforcement matters with navigation implications to report.

Author: John Packman

Date of report: 18 August 2025

[Broads Plan](#) strategic actions: Theme C

Appendix 1 – Rangers exercise of powers analysis

Appendix 2 – Ranger duties total time allocated and actual days

Appendix 3 – Sunken and abandoned vessels current position as at 13/08/2025

Appendix 4 – Prosecutions dealt with in court for non-payment of tolls since 03/04/2025

Appendix 5 – Prosecutions dealt with in court for navigation offences since 03/04/2025

Appendix 6 – Ranger logs – 2024/2503 April 2025

Appendix 1 – Rangers exercise of powers analysis

Table 1

| Verbal warnings | Wroxham launch Wroxham and upper Bure | Irstead launch Ant | Ludham launch Hickling, Potter Heigham, upper Thurne | Ludham launch 2 lower Thurne and lower Bure | Norwich launch Norwich and upper Yare | Hardley Launch Reedham, Chet and middle Yare | Burgh St Peter launch Oulton Broad and upper/middle Waveney | Breydon launch Breydon water, lower Waveney and Yare |
|------------------------|---|------------------------------|--|---|---|--|---|--|
| Care and caution | 77 | 53 | 14 | 60 | 24 | 2 | 34 | |
| Speed | 1754 | 699 | 408 | 334 | 150 | 80 | 171 | 44 |
| Other | 242 | 88 | 15 | 19 | 153 | 15 | 33 | 36 |

Table 2

| Written warnings | Wroxham launch | Irstead launch | Ludham launch | Ludham launch 2 | Norwich launch | Hardley Launch | Burgh St Peter launch | Breydon launch |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Care and caution | 1 | 3 | | | 1 | | | 3 |
| Speed | 35 | 1 | | 5 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Other | 17 | 32 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 22 | 12 | 5 |
| Special directions | 46 | 10 | 1 | | 25 | 60 | 191 | 69 |

Table 3

| Launch patrols | Wroxham launch | Irstead launch | Ludham launch | Ludham launch 2 | Norwich launch | Hardley Launch | Burgh St Peter launch | Breydon launch |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Launch staffed by ranger | 214 | 211 | 198 | 197 | 205 | 191 | 204 | 214 |
| Volunteer patrols | | | 2 | 1 | | | 5 | |
| IRIS reports | 20 | 8 | 8 | 10 | 9 | 19 | 8 | 28 |

Table 4

Broads Control total calls

| Contact method | Number of calls |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Telephone | 19518 |
| VHF | 2610 |
| Total | 22,128 |

Appendix 2 – Ranger duties: total time allocated and actual days

Table 1

Broads Authority corporate duties

| Work area | Annual allocation (days) | Actual days to date |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Training | 122 | 93.65 |
| Broads Control | 362 | 277.30 |
| Team meetings, work planning | 318 | 302.14 |
| Partnership working | 76 | 15.68 |
| Assisting other sections | 76 | 37.91 |
| Billets and boatsheds | 25 | 16.55 |
| Launch – general | | 8.48 |
| Trailers - general | | 1.69 |
| Vehicle maintenance | | 5.41 |
| Other equipment repair | | 9.73 |
| Total | 979 | 768.53 |

Table 2

Navigation duties

| Work area | Annual allocation (days) | Actual days to date |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Patrolling | 2136 | 1740.59 |
| Escorts | 44 | 27.50 |
| Prosecution files | 0 | 20.07 |
| Bankside tree management | 108 | 48.34 |
| Obstruction removal | 26 | 13.45 |
| Channel markers and buoys | 30 | 17.06 |
| Signs and boards maintenance | 34 | 32.97 |
| Adjacent waters | 96 | 72.77 |
| Reactive mooring maintenance | 100.5 | 42.30 |
| Total | 2575.5 | 2015.05 |

Table 3

Conservation, recreation, countryside maintenance

| Work area | Annual allocation (days) | Actual days to date |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Fen management | 146 | 45.95 |
| Lake, riverbank restoration | 100 | 0 |
| Invasive species control | 32.5 | 1.28 |
| Other conservation work | 145 | 64.86 |
| Pollution response | | 2.09 |
| Visitor site maintenance | 194 | 146.72 |
| Public Engagement | 97 | 59.26 |
| Public footpath work | 38 | 11.25 |
| Education work | 69 | 2.84 |
| Total | 4375 | 3117.84 |

Team total up to 31 March 2025*

Percentage Navigation: 86%

Percentage National Park: 14%

*Figures for the year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

Appendix 3 – Sunken and abandoned vessels current position as at 13 August 2025

| Description | Location found | Action | Notice affixed | Result |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|---|----------------|------------------------------------|
| Motor Cruiser | Old River Yare, Thorpe | Vessel sunk at owners moorings | No | Not affecting the navigation |
| Motor Cruiser | River Yare, Trowse | Vessel sunk behind rail bridge wooden fenders | Yes | Not affecting the navigation |
| Motor Cruiser | Polkeys Mill, Lower Yare | Vessel sunk in channel. Divers engaged to remove vessel | Yes | Vessel recovered to Dockyard |
| Sailing Barge | Berney Arms | Vessel sunk just outside channel. | Yes | Vessel recovered to Dockyard |
| Motor cruiser | Wensum, downstream of rail bridge | Vessel sunk at mooring, marked with buoys | No | Vessel recovered to Dockyard |
| Auxiliary Yacht | Langley Dyke, River Yare | Vessel sunk at wild mooring | Yes | Vessel recovered to the Dockyard |
| Auxiliary Yacht | Barton Turf | Vessel Sunk at wild mooring, raised by owner | Yes | Unserviceable Vessel Notice issued |
| Auxiliary Yacht | Cantley | Unknown owner | Yes | Owner has come forward |
| Auxiliary Yacht | Sutton | Unknown owner | Yes | Owner have come forward |

| Description | Location found | Action | Notice affixed | Result |
|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Auxiliary Yacht | Ludham Bridge | Unknown owner | Yes | Owner has come forward |
| Rowing dinghy | Great Yarmouth | Vessel sunk | Yes | Vessel recovered to Dockyard |
| Speedboat | Hoveton | Unknown owner | Yes | Notice period ends 19.9.25 |

Appendix 4 – Prosecutions dealt with in court for non-payment of tolls since 03 April 2025

| Type of vessel | Fined | Costs awarded | Victim surcharge | Compensation |
|-----------------------------------|-------|---------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| Motor | £120 | £200 | £48 | £424.81 |
| Motor | £120 | £200 | £48 | £221.64 |
| Auxiliary Yacht - Unregistered | £660 | £200 | £264 | £218.56 |
| Motor | £440 | £200 | £176 | £424.81 |
| Motor | £440 | £200 | £176 | £572.57 |
| Motor | £440 | £200 | £176 | £1052.79 |
| Motor & Auxiliary Yacht | £240 | £300 | £96 | £406.84 & £136.60 |
| Motor | £308 | £200 | £123 | £313.99 |
| Motor & Rowing | £220 | £200 | £88 | £738.80 & £46.32 |
| Motor | £220 | £200 | £88 | £406.34 |
| Auxiliary Yacht, Sailing & Rowing | £220 | £200 | £88 | £221.64, £124.08 & £46.32 |
| Auxiliary Yacht | £220 | £280 | £88 | £229.20 |
| Motor x 2 | £880 | £220 | £352 | £147.76 & £406.34 |
| Motor | £220 | £220 | £88 | £221.64 |
| Motor | £440 | £220 | £176 | £406.34 |
| Motor | £220 | £220 | £88 | £369.40 |
| Auxiliary Yacht | £220 | £220 | £88 | £150.26 |

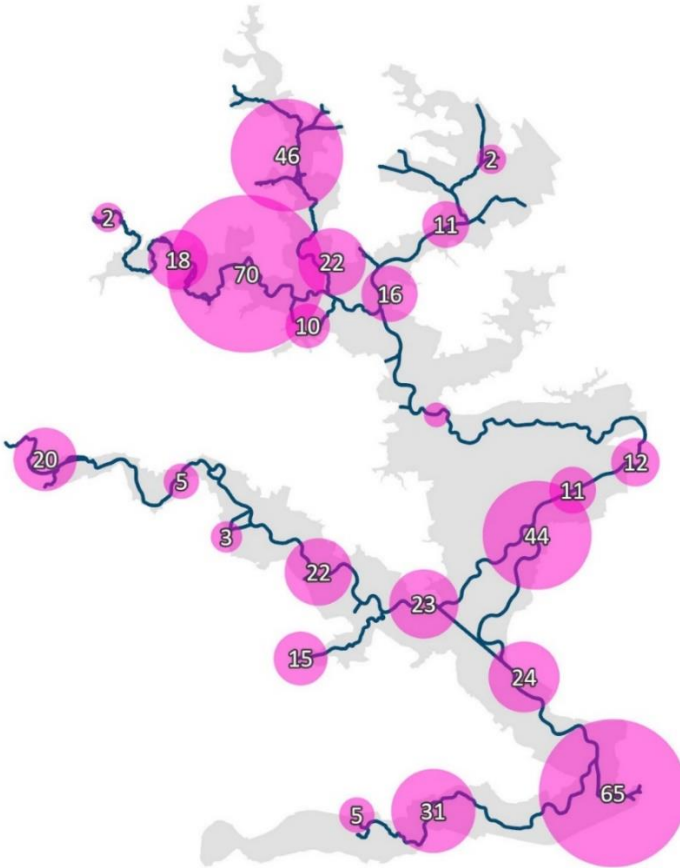
| Type of vessel | Fined | Costs awarded | Victim surcharge | Compensation |
|-----------------|-------|---------------|------------------|--------------|
| Auxiliary Yacht | £500 | £220 | £200 | £202.24 |
| Motor | £220 | £225 | £88 | £683.39 |
| Sailing | £440 | £225 | £176 | £225.60 |

Appendix 5 – Prosecutions dealt with in court for navigation offences since 03 April 2025

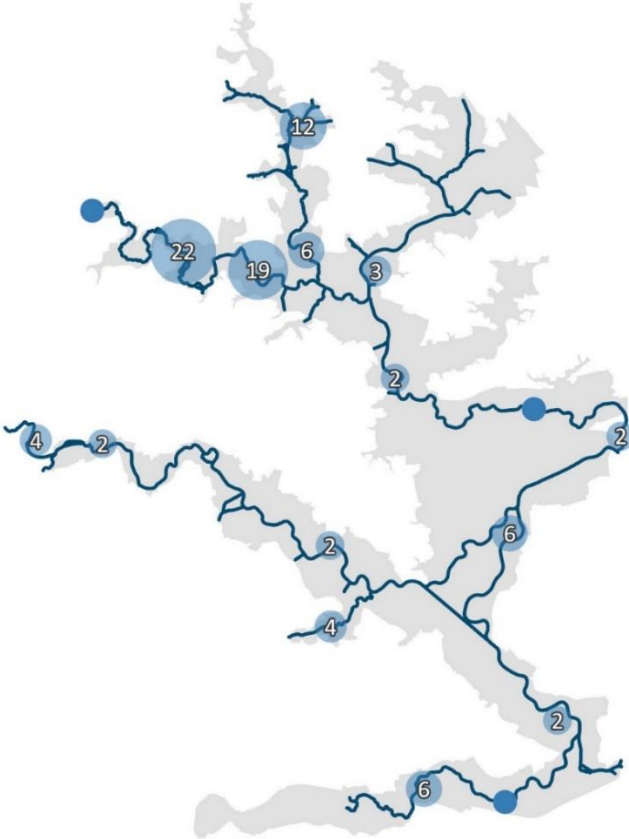
| Type of vessel | Offence | Fined | Costs awarded | Victim surcharge | Compensation |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|-------|---------------|------------------|--------------|
| Jet Ski | Operating a Jet Ski on the Broads | £660 | £850 | £264 | n/a |
| Motor vessels | Overstaying | £440 | £400 | £176 | n/a |

Appendix 6 – Ranger logs – 2024/25

Notice of Contravention

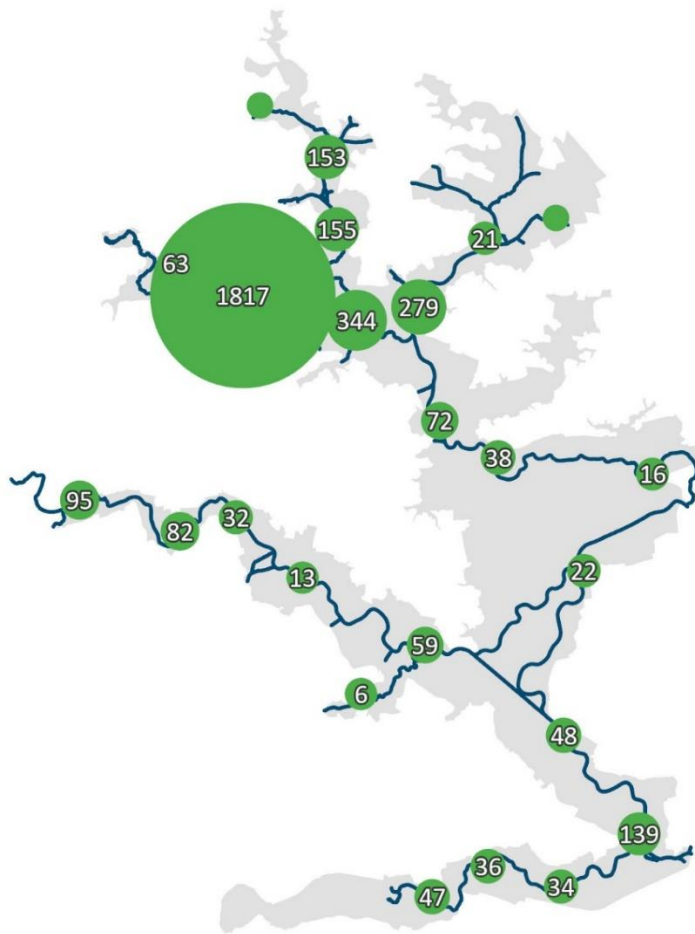


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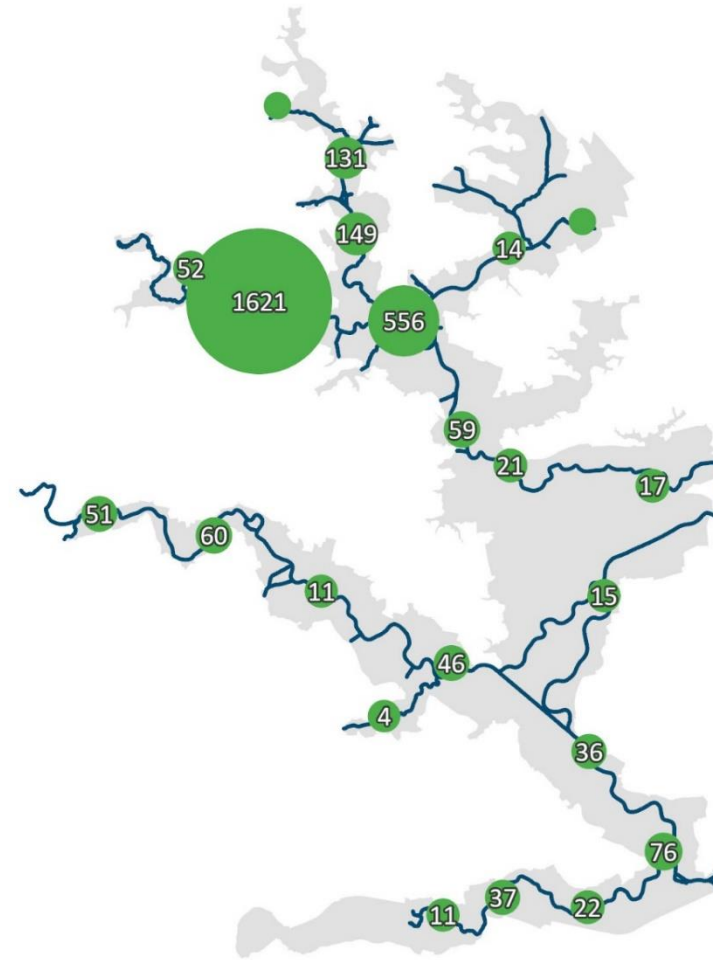


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Verbal warnings

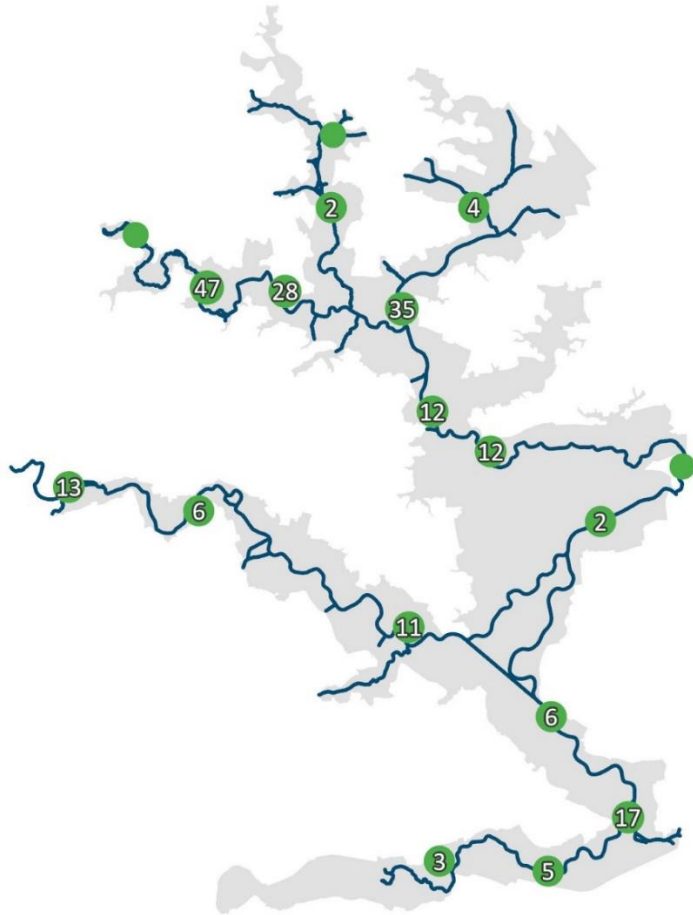


Verbal warnings – Excess speed

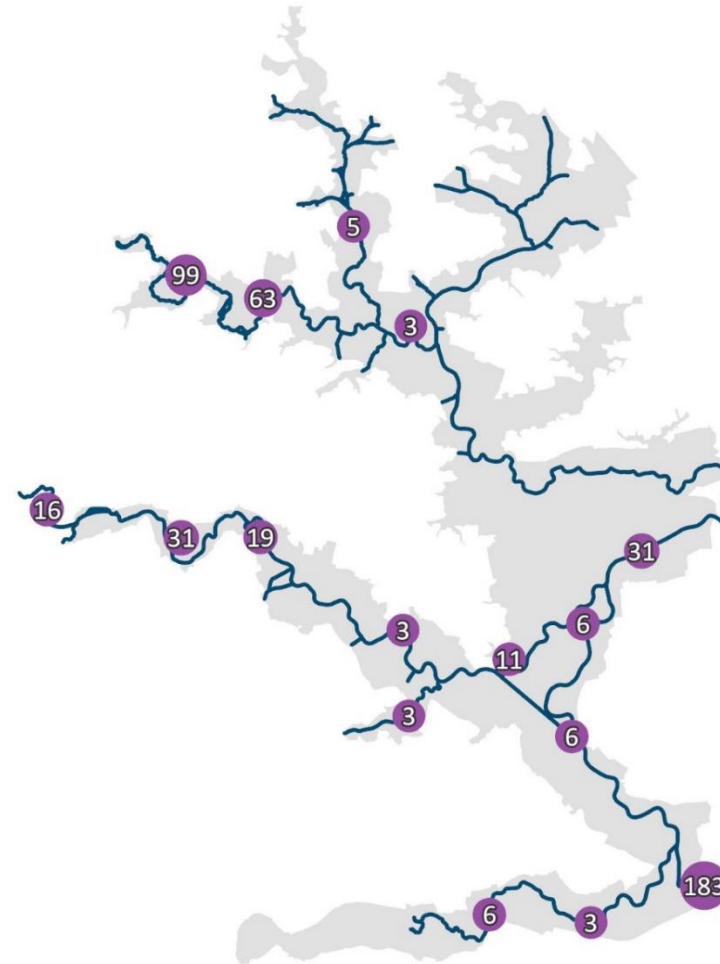


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Verbal warnings – Care and caution

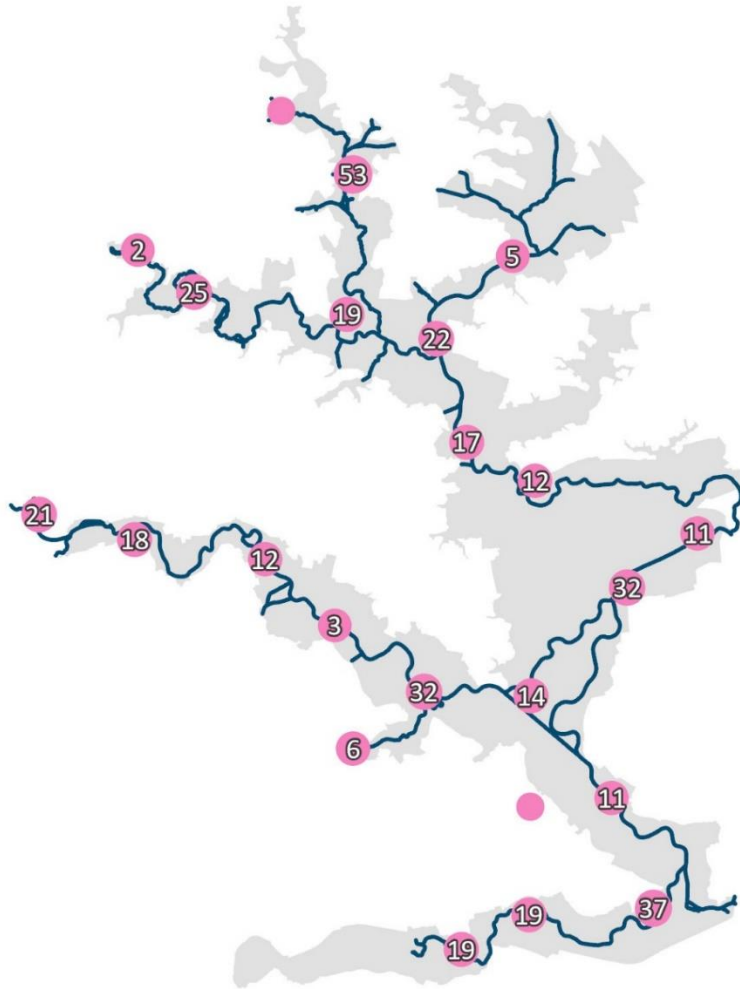


Special directions

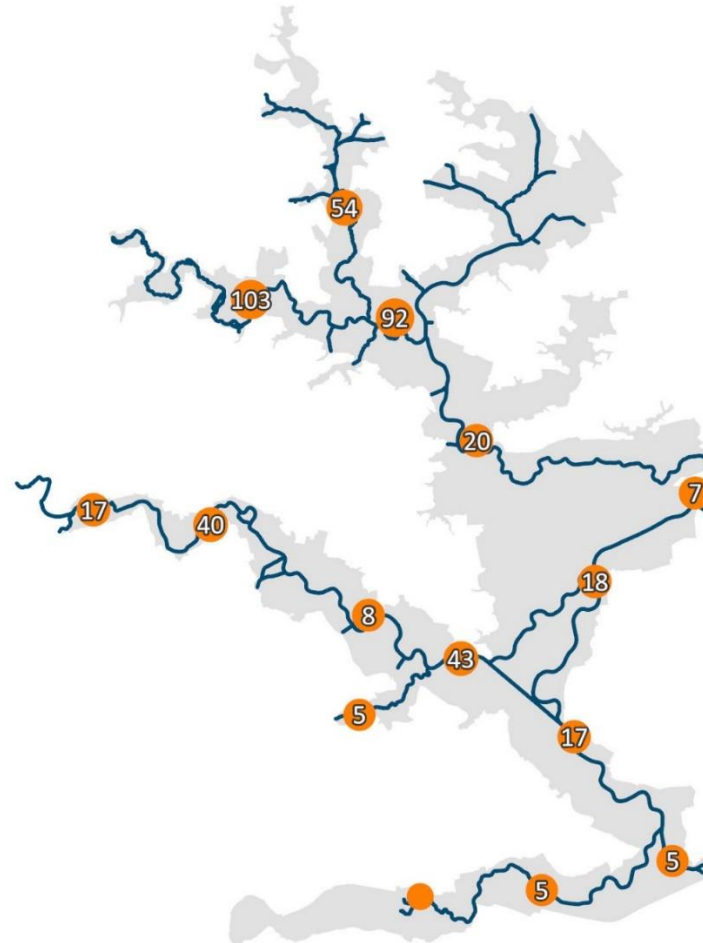


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Hazards removed

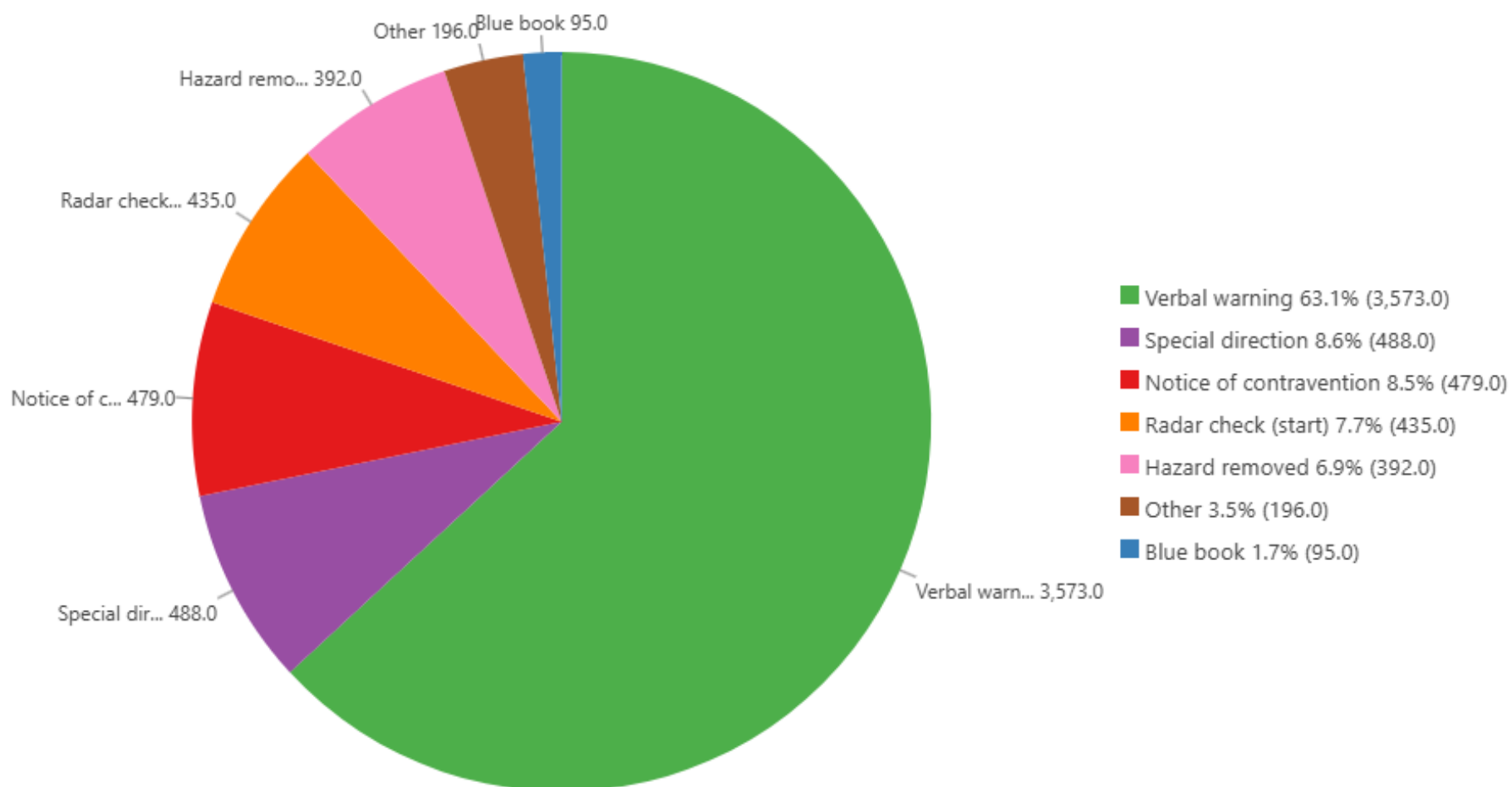


Radar checks



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Report type



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Navigation Committee

04 September 2025

Agenda item number 7

Annual Income and Expenditure 2024/25

Report by Director of Resources

Purpose

To inform the Committee of the summary of the Authority's income and expenditure for 2024/25 financial year, analysed between General (National Park) and Navigation funds. Original and Latest Available Budget information is provided for comparison.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Broads Act 2009 requires the Authority to prepare a report as soon as reasonable possible after the end of each financial year describing the navigation income received by it and the navigation expenditure incurred by it in that year.

2. Actual income and expenditure 2024/25

- 2.1. The tables in Appendix 1 sets out the Authority's income and expenditure attributed to General (National Park Grant) and Navigation funds for the financial year ended 31 March 2025. To the extent that they are included within the Authority's Statement of Accounts, these figures are subject to audit and formal approval by the Authority's external auditors. For comparative purposes, the Original and Latest Available Budget (LAB) figures are also shown. This information is published on the Authority's website.

- 2.2. The actual outturn for 2024/25 was a surplus of £266,911 for Navigation compared with a budgeted LAB surplus for the year of £87,214. The original budget was for a surplus of £114,294. The final forecast outturn was a surplus of £166,742.
- 2.3. Total core income for the year was £4,560,223, which was £64,707 below budget, principally due to the favourable variance of £63,416 within investment income which offset the adverse variances within Hire (£30,688) and Private Craft (£97,611). There continued to be smaller favourable variances within Short Visit and Other Toll income budget lines.
- 2.4. Other income has not performed in line with budget predictions. This was due to the charging not coming into force at Reedham Quay due to delayed lease negotiations.
- 2.5. Total net navigation expenditure in 2024/25 was £4,293,312, which was £244,404 below the budget. This was due to mooring works being deferred to 2025/26, capital equipment being funded by the capital grant and the pay increase coming in under budget.

3. Earmarked reserves

- 3.1. The earmarked reserves have funded the following expenditure:
- Property reserve includes the rental income from land at Oulton Broad (£2,000), repairs to Mutford Lock dates (£94,824) and piling at Repps bank (£50,213).
 - Plant, Vessels and Equipment reserve includes four replacement vehicles (£81,737). This has been offset by the sales proceeds from the vehicle replacements (£9,028), the sale of old equipment (£10,212) and the annual contribution to the vehicle replacements (£41,950).
 - Premises reserve includes the feasibility reports into the Dockyard Solar project (£2,558) and the final costs relating to Reedham Quay replacement hut (£362).
 - Computer software reserve includes the costs for the new cloud-based tolls system (£27,500) and the new cloud-based finance system (£2,252).
- 3.2. After the year end transfer of interest, the closing position on the earmarked reserves is as follows:

Table 1
Navigation Earmarked Reserves

| Reserve Name | Balance at 1 April 2024 £ | In year movements £ | Closing reserve balance £ |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Property | (618,681) | 112,435 | (506,246) |
| Plant, Vessels and Equipment | (492,192) | (9,797) | (501,989) |

| Reserve Name | Balance at 1 April 2024 £ | In year movements £ | Closing reserve balance £ |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Premises | (217,434) | (10,881) | (228,315) |
| Computer Software | (127,533) | 23,461 | (104,072) |
| Total | (1,455,840) | 115,218 | (1,340,622) |

4. Summary

- 4.1. The total Navigation surplus for 2024/25 was higher than the budgeted and the forecast surplus. The main reason for the variance between the forecast and actual position was the increased expenditure set out in paragraph 2.5.
- 4.2. Whilst investment income has exceeded expectations due to the increased rates implemented by the Bank of England these rates are expected to drop in the future, much closer to their forecast level of inflation of 2%. This means that the level of return in future years may reduce.
- 4.3. 2024/25 sees the third repayment of £50,000 between the Navigation and National Park Reserve which means the balance on the Navigation Reserve at the end of 2024/25 is £627,403, this is above the minimum 10% at 14.6%. However, it should be noted that as the £50,000 per annum transfer back to National Park, continues in 2025/26, alongside the planned expenditure in the Financial Strategy, this will reduce the Reserve down to 9.9%. This will be refined later this year when the level of tolls for 2026/27 is considered.

Author: Emma Krelle

Date of report: 14 August 2025

Appendix 1 – General and Navigation income and expenditure 2024/25

Appendix 1 – General and Navigation income and expenditure 2024/25

The Broads Authority Act 2009 requires the Authority to prepare a report as soon as reasonably possible after the end of each financial year describing the navigation income received by it and the navigation expenditure incurred by it in that year. The table below sets out the Authority's income and expenditure attributed to general (National Park Grant) and navigation funds for the financial year ended 31 March 2025. These figures are derived from the annual Statement of Accounts which is subject to audit and formal approval by the Authority's external auditors, Ernst & Young (EY). For comparative purposes, the final approved budget figures are also shown.

Further details are available on request from the Director of Resources, Yare House, 62-64 Thorpe Road, Norwich NR1 1RY or by email from emma.krelle@broads-authority.gov.uk.

The Draft Statement of Accounts for 2024/25 audit by EY to started on 21 July 2025 and will run until September. Once the audit has been completed the final version will be presented to the next available Broads Authority.

Table 1

Income

| Income Type | Original Budget General £ | Original Budget Navigation £ | Original Budget Consolidated £ | Latest Available Budget General £ | Latest Available Budget Navigation £ | Lates Available Budget Consolidated £ | Actual Income General £ | Actual Income Navigation £ | Actual Income Consolidated £ |
|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| National Park Grant | (3,414,078) | 0 | (3,414,078) | (3,414,078) | 0 | (3,414,078) | (3,914,078) | 0 | (3,914,078) |
| Hire Craft Tolls | 0 | (1,436,000) | (1,436,000) | 0 | (1,436,000) | (1,436,000) | 0 | (1,405,312) | (1,405,312) |
| Private Craft Tolls | 0 | (3,006,000) | (3,006,000) | 0 | (3,006,000) | (3,006,000) | 0 | (2,908,389) | (2,908,389) |
| Short Visit Tolls | 0 | (60,000) | (60,000) | 0 | (60,000) | (60,000) | 0 | (54,616) | (54,616) |
| Other Toll Income | 0 | (32,930) | (32,930) | 0 | (32,930) | (32,930) | 0 | (38,490) | (38,490) |
| Interest Received | (90,000) | (90,000) | (180,000) | (90,000) | (90,000) | (180,000) | (153,416) | (153,416) | (306,832) |
| Income Total | (3,504,078) | (4,624,930) | (8,129,008) | (3,504,078) | (4,624,930) | (8,129,008) | (4,067,494) | (4,560,223) | (8,627,717) |

Table 2

Operations

| Expenditure Type | Original Budget General £ | Original Budget Navigation £ | Original Budget Consolidated £ | Latest Available Budget General £ | Latest Available Budget Navigation £ | Lates Available Budget Consolidated £ | Actual Expenditure General £ | Actual Expenditure Navigation £ | Actual Expenditure Consolidated £ |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Construction & Maintenance Salaries | 621,835 | 1,041,095 | 1,662,930 | 621,835 | 1,041,095 | 1,662,930 | 585,259 | 977,806 | 1,563,065 |
| Equipment, Vehicles & Vessels | 184,980 | 431,620 | 616,600 | 184,980 | 431,620 | 616,600 | 117,882 | 275,057 | 392,939 |

| Expenditure Type | Original Budget General £ | Original Budget Navigation £ | Original Budget Consolidated £ | Latest Available Budget General £ | Latest Available Budget Navigation £ | Lates Available Budget Consolidated £ | Actual Expenditure General £ | Actual Expenditure Navigation £ | Actual Expenditure Consolidated £ |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Water Management | 5,500 | 75,000 | 80,500 | 5,500 | 75,000 | 80,500 | 5,800 | 70,650 | 76,451 |
| Land Management | 57,350 | 0 | 57,350 | 57,350 | 0 | 57,350 | 174,613 | 0 | 174,613 |
| Practical Maintenance | 327,140 | 393,250 | 720,390 | 327,140 | 583,355 | 910,495 | 254,331 | 404,571 | 658,901 |
| Waterways & Recreation Strategy | 107,981 | 31,530 | 139,511 | 107,981 | 31,530 | 139,511 | 90,372 | 24,686 | 115,058 |
| Rangers Salaries | 210,681 | 842,725 | 1,053,406 | 210,681 | 842,725 | 1,053,406 | 202,721 | 810,885 | 1,013,607 |
| Ranger Services | 20,350 | 350,150 | 370,500 | 20,350 | 350,150 | 370,500 | 19,368 | 154,580 | 173,948 |
| Safety | 47,390 | 100,280 | 147,670 | 47,390 | 100,280 | 147,670 | 35,096 | 89,794 | 124,890 |
| Project Funding | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 13,390 | 1,322 | 14,712 |
| Operational Premises | 47,812 | 78,708 | 126,520 | 50,062 | 83,958 | 134,020 | 51,949 | 88,910 | 140,860 |
| Management & Admin | 62,768 | 94,152 | 156,920 | 62,768 | 94,152 | 156,920 | 61,713 | 92,570 | 154,283 |
| Operations Income | (162,226) | (29,585) | (191,811) | (162,226) | (67,610) | (229,836) | (282,006) | (44,243) | (326,248) |
| Total Operations | 1,531,562 | 3,408,924 | 4,940,486 | 1,533,812 | 3,566,255 | 5,100,066 | 1,330,489 | 2,946,588 | 4,277,077 |

Table 3
Strategic Services

| Expenditure Type | Original Budget General £ | Original Budget Navigation £ | Original Budget Consolidated £ | Latest Available Budget General £ | Latest Available Budget Navigation £ | Lates Available Budget Consolidated £ | Actual Expenditure General £ | Actual Expenditure Navigation £ | Actual Expenditure Consolidated £ |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Development Management | 573,455 | 5,126 | 578,580 | 573,455 | 5,126 | 578,580 | 573,339 | 5,050 | 578,389 |
| Strategy & Projects Salaries | 341,453 | 29,287 | 370,740 | 341,453 | 29,287 | 370,740 | 335,759 | 28,302 | 364,062 |
| Biodiversity Strategy | 8,520 | 0 | 8,520 | 8,520 | 0 | 8,520 | 80,127 | 0 | 80,127 |
| Strategy & Projects | 664,388 | 0 | 664,388 | 660,888 | 0 | 660,888 | 623,140 | (3,684) | 619,457 |
| Human Resources | 91,442 | 84,408 | 175,850 | 91,442 | 84,408 | 175,850 | 86,788 | 80,112 | 166,900 |

| Expenditure Type | Original Budget General £ | Original Budget Navigation £ | Original Budget Consolidated £ | Latest Available Budget General £ | Latest Available Budget Navigation £ | Lates Available Budget Consolidated £ | Actual Expenditure General £ | Actual Expenditure Navigation £ | Actual Expenditure Consolidated £ |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Volunteers | 61,043 | 22,577 | 83,620 | 61,043 | 22,577 | 83,620 | 45,377 | 16,783 | 62,161 |
| Communications | 285,569 | 96,141 | 381,710 | 288,819 | 96,141 | 384,960 | 342,213 | 93,606 | 435,818 |
| Visitor Centres & Yacht Stations | 240,677 | 346,483 | 587,160 | 240,677 | 346,483 | 587,160 | 245,338 | 356,630 | 601,968 |
| Management & Admin | 98,056 | 42,024 | 140,080 | 98,056 | 42,024 | 140,080 | 87,311 | 37,419 | 124,730 |
| Strategic Services Income | (909,548) | (143,960) | (1,053,508) | (909,298) | (143,960) | (1,053,258) | (1,269,797) | (129,009) | (1,398,806) |
| Total Strategic Services | 1,455,054 | 482,086 | 1,937,140 | 1,455,054 | 482,086 | 1,937,140 | 1,149,595 | 485,210 | 1,634,805 |

Table 4

Finance and Support Services

| Expenditure Type | Original Budget General £ | Original Budget Navigation £ | Original Budget Consolidated £ | Latest Available Budget General £ | Latest Available Budget Navigation £ | Lates Available Budget Consolidated £ | Actual Expenditure General £ | Actual Expenditure Navigation £ | Actual Expenditure Consolidated £ |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| National Park Grant | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 509,973 | 0 | 509,973 |
| Legal | 110,000 | 40,000 | 150,000 | 110,000 | 40,000 | 150,000 | 59,240 | 67,228 | 126,468 |
| Governance | 128,764 | 132,947 | 261,710 | 128,764 | 132,947 | 261,710 | 126,679 | 130,061 | 256,740 |
| Finance & Insurance | 259,951 | 318,119 | 578,070 | 259,951 | 318,119 | 578,070 | 241,079 | 294,101 | 535,180 |
| Premises Head Office | 97,680 | 50,320 | 148,000 | 381,569 | 50,320 | 431,889 | 384,963 | 60,181 | 445,144 |
| Collection of Tolls | 0 | 228,380 | 228,380 | 0 | 228,380 | 228,380 | 0 | 219,918 | 219,918 |
| ICT | 254,170 | 262,695 | 516,865 | 254,170 | 262,695 | 516,865 | 225,837 | 224,491 | 450,329 |
| Asset Management | 74,650 | 80,741 | 155,390 | 74,650 | 80,741 | 155,390 | 67,915 | 59,562 | 127,478 |
| Chief Executive | 82,004 | 53,696 | 135,700 | 82,004 | 53,696 | 135,700 | 80,944 | 52,995 | 133,939 |
| Finance & Support Services Income | (21,165) | (9,135) | (30,300) | (21,165) | (9,135) | (30,300) | (22,835) | (12,757) | (35,593) |

| Expenditure Type | Original Budget General £ | Original Budget Navigation £ | Original Budget Consolidated £ | Latest Available Budget General £ | Latest Available Budget Navigation £ | Lates Available Budget Consolidated £ | Actual Expenditure General £ | Actual Expenditure Navigation £ | Actual Expenditure Consolidated £ |
|---|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Total Finance & Support Services | 986,052 | 1,157,763 | 2,143,815 | 1,269,942 | 1,157,763 | 2,427,704 | 1,673,796 | 1,095,780 | 2,769,576 |

Table 5
Projects and Corporate Items

| Expenditure Type | Original Budget General £ | Original Budget Navigation £ | Original Budget Consolidated £ | Latest Available Budget General £ | Latest Available Budget Navigation £ | Lates Available Budget Consolidated £ | Actual Expenditure General £ | Actual Expenditure Navigation £ | Actual Expenditure Consolidated £ |
|---|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Heritage Lottery Fund | (91,875) | 0 | (91,875) | (91,875) | 0 | (91,875) | (107,623) | 0 | (107,623) |
| Apprenticeship Levy | 4,437 | 4,263 | 8,700 | 4,437 | 4,263 | 8,700 | 4,100 | 3,939 | 8,038 |
| Total Projects and Corporate Items | (87,438) | 4,263 | (83,175) | (87,438) | 4,263 | (83,175) | (103,523) | 3,939 | (99,585) |

Table 6
Contributions from earmarked reserves

| Expenditure Type | Original Budget General £ | Original Budget Navigation £ | Original Budget Consolidated £ | Latest Available Budget General £ | Latest Available Budget Navigation £ | Lates Available Budget Consolidated £ | Actual Expenditure General £ | Actual Expenditure Navigation £ | Actual Expenditure Consolidated £ |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Property | (250,000) | (48,000) | (298,000) | (250,000) | (173,000) | (423,000) | (213,051) | (143,036) | (356,088) |
| Plant, Vessels & Equipment | (89,100) | (427,900) | (517,000) | (89,100) | (427,900) | (517,000) | (26,256) | (62,497) | (88,753) |
| Premises | 0 | 0 | 0 | (17,428) | (5,250) | (22,678) | (13,176) | (2,920) | (16,097) |
| Planning Delivery Grant | (20,500) | 0 | (20,500) | (20,500) | 0 | (20,500) | 191,631 | 0 | 191,631 |
| Heritage Lottery Fund | 91,875 | 0 | 91,875 | 91,875 | 0 | 91,875 | 105,466 | 0 | 105,466 |
| Upper Thurne | (12,000) | 0 | (12,000) | (12,000) | 0 | (12,000) | (5,181) | 0 | (5,181) |
| Catchment Partnership | (25,078) | 0 | (25,078) | (25,078) | 0 | (25,078) | (24,478) | 0 | (24,478) |
| Medium Term Planning | (57,600) | 0 | (57,600) | (326,312) | 0 | (326,312) | (310,477) | 0 | (310,477) |

| Expenditure Type | Original Budget General £ | Original Budget Navigation £ | Original Budget Consolidated £ | Latest Available Budget General £ | Latest Available Budget Navigation £ | Lates Available Budget Consolidated £ | Actual Expenditure General £ | Actual Expenditure Navigation £ | Actual Expenditure Consolidated £ |
|--|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Computer Software | (33,500) | (66,500) | (100,000) | (33,500) | (66,500) | (100,000) | (4,572) | (29,752) | (34,323) |
| UK NP Communications Team | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | (771) | 0 | (771) |
| Total Contributions from reserves | (395,903) | (542,400) | (938,303) | (682,042) | (672,650) | (1,354,692) | (300,865) | (238,205) | (539,070) |

Table 7
Net (Surplus)/Deficit

| Expenditure Type | Original Budget General £ | Original Budget Navigation £ | Original Budget Consolidated £ | Latest Available Budget General £ | Latest Available Budget Navigation £ | Lates Available Budget Consolidated £ | Actual Expenditure General £ | Actual Expenditure Navigation £ | Actual Expenditure Consolidated £ |
|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Grand Total | (14,751) | (114,294) | (129,045) | (14,751) | (87,214) | (101,965) | (318,003) | (266,911) | (584,914) |

Navigation Committee

04 September 2025

Agenda item number 8

Navigation income and expenditure 1 April to 31 July 2025 actual and 2025/26 forecast outturn

Report by Director of Resources

Purpose

To present the actual Navigation income and expenditure for the four-month period to 31 July 2025 and provide a forecast of the projected expenditure at the end of the financial year (31 March 2026).

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report gives a summary of the income and expenditure for the Navigation budget up until 31 July, any amendments to the Latest Available Budget (LAB), Forecast Outturn (predicted year end position) and the movements on the earmarked reserves.
- 1.2. The Directorates below were those in place as at the end of July. The next report to the committee will reflect the updated organisation structure.

2. Overview of actual income and expenditure

Table 1

Actual Navigation income and expenditure by Directorate to 31 July 2025

| Directorate | Profiled Latest Available Budget £ | Actual income and expenditure £ | Actual variance £ |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Income | (4,222,675) | (4,080,404) | - 142,271 |
| Operations | 1,403,844 | 1,064,650 | + 339,194 |
| Strategic Services | 202,527 | 169,091 | + 33,436 |
| Finance & Support Services | 478,641 | 452,226 | + 26,415 |
| Projects, Corporate Items and Contributions from Earmarked Reserves | (160,608) | 2,065 | - 162,673 |
| Net (Surplus) / Deficit | (2,298,271) | (2,392,372) | + 94,101 |

- 2.1. Core Navigation income is below the profiled budget at the end of month four. The overall position as at 31 July 2025 is a favourable variance of £94,101 or a 4.09% difference from the profiled LAB. This is principally due to:

- An overall adverse variance of £142,271 within income:
 - Hire Craft Tolls is £99,940 below the profiled budget.
 - Private Craft Tolls is £63,066 below the profiled budget.
 - Short Visit and Other Toll income £7,525 above the profile budget.
 - Investment income is £13,210 above the profiled budget.
- An underspend within Operations relating to:

- Construction, Maintenance and Ecology salaries is £27,165 below the profiled budget due to the pay award being 0.8% less than budgeted. The pay award will be implemented in September and back dated to 1 April 2025. The forecast for the saving has been updated accordingly.
- Equipment, Vehicles and Vessels is £72,112 below the profiled budget due to timing differences on the replacement of equipment and vehicles from the earmarked reserves.
- Practical Maintenance is £125,320 below the profiled budget due to a timing difference on contractor spend and the Mutford Lock technical review.
- Waterways and Recreation Strategy is £10,278 below the profiled budget due to delays in recruitment for a vacancy.
- Ranger Services is £80,067 below the profiled budget due to the pay award being 0.8% less than budgeted. The pay award will be implemented in September and back dated to 1 April 2025. The forecast for the saving has been updated accordingly. There is also timing differences in the replacement of the Ranger launch.
- Premises is £22,006 below the profiled budget due to timing differences on the Dockyard solar and repiling project.
- An underspend within Strategic Services relating to:
 - Visitor Services and Yacht Stations is £25,448 above the profiled budget due to the pay award being 0.8% less than budgeted. The pay award will be implemented in September and back dated to 1 April 2025. The forecast for the saving has been updated accordingly. There is also timing differences on repairs and maintenance on the yacht stations.
- An underspend within Finance and Support Services relating to:
 - ICT is £15,975 below the profiled budget due to timing differences.
- An adverse variance within reserves relating to:
 - Premises is above the profile due to delays in works at the Dockyard.
 - Plant, Vessels and Equipment is above the profile due to delays in equipment replacements.
 - Property is above the profile due to delays in Mutford Lock technical review.

2.2. The charts at Appendix 1 provide a visual overview of actual income and expenditure compared with both the original budget and the LAB.

3. Latest Available Budget

3.1. The Authority’s income and expenditure is monitored against the Latest Available Budget (LAB) for 2025/26. The LAB is based on the original budget for the year, with adjustments for known and approved budget changes such as carry-forwards and budget virements. Full details of movements from the original budget are in Appendix 2.

Table 2
Adjustments to Navigation LAB

| Item | Authorisation reference | Amount £ |
|---|--|---------------|
| Original budget 2025/26 | Broads Authority 24/01/2025 Agenda item number 9 | 8,471 |
| Carry forward requests | Broads Authority 09/05/2025 Agenda item number 10 | 720 |
| Budget adjustments (salary savings, interest rate improvements and removal of sunken vessels) | Broads Authority 09/05/2025 Agenda item number 11 | 46,544 |
| Budget adjustments (recruitment of a new CEO) | Broads Authority 25/07/2025 Agenda item number 20 | 11,871 |
| LAB as at 31 July 2025 | n/a | 67,606 |

3.2. The LAB therefore provides for a navigation deficit of £67,606 in 2025/26 as at 31 July 2025.

4. Overview of forecast outturn 2025/26

4.1. Budget holders have been asked to comment on the expected income and expenditure at the end of the financial year in respect of all budget lines for which they are responsible.

4.2. As at the end of July 2025, the forecast indicates there has been no change compared to the LAB:

- The total forecast income is £4,623,816.
- Total expenditure is forecast to be £4,688,098.
- The resulting deficit for the year is forecast to be £64,282.

- 4.3. The forecast outturn reflects the following changes from the LAB as shown in Table 3. The forecast deficit represents a favourable variance of £3,324 against the LAB.

Table 3

Adjustments to Forecast Outturn

| Item | Amount £ |
|---|---------------|
| Forecast outturn deficit as per LAB | 67,606 |
| Decrease to staff costs for vacancies and pay award | (105,808) |
| Decrease to Hire Craft income | 34,442 |
| Decrease to Private Craft income | 68,042 |
| Forecast outturn deficit as at 31 July 2025 | 64,282 |

5. Reserves

Table 4

Navigation Earmarked Reserves

| Reserve name | Balance at 1 April 2025 £ | In-year movements £ | Current reserve balance £ |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Property | (506,246) | (25,796) | (532,042) |
| Plant, Vessels and Equipment | (501,989) | (150,597) | (652,586) |
| Premises | (228,315) | (29,633) | (257,948) |
| Computer Software | (104,072) | (5,092) | (109,164) |
| Total | (1,340,622) | (211,118) | (1,551,740) |

- 5.1. As in previous years the annual contributions to the earmarked reserves have been made in full at the end of quarter one.
- 5.2. Items funded from the Property reserve contains the income from land rental at Oulton Broad. The Plant, Vessels and Equipment reserve contains the income from the sale of old equipment. The Computer Software reserve has funded the work on the Ranger app for the new cloud-based tolls system.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. The forecast outturn position for the year suggests a deficit within the Navigation budget, which would result in a Navigation Reserve balance of approximately £563,000 at the end of 2025/26 (before any year-end adjustments). This would mean the Navigation Reserve would be above the recommended 10% at 12%. Year-end transfers

of interest to the earmarked reserves mean it will fall to approximately 9.9%. This will be highly dependent on the level of interest received.

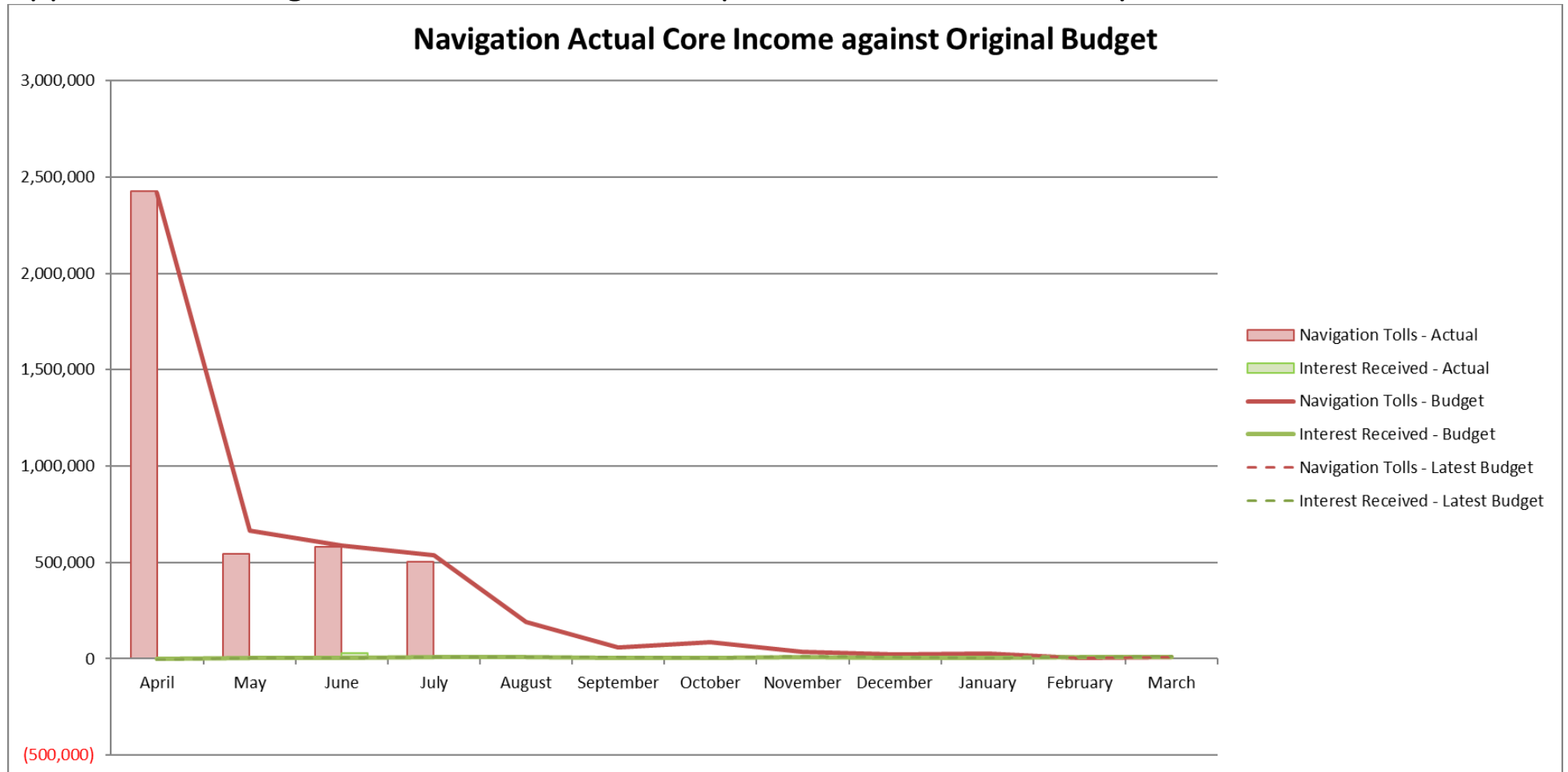
Author: Emma Krelle

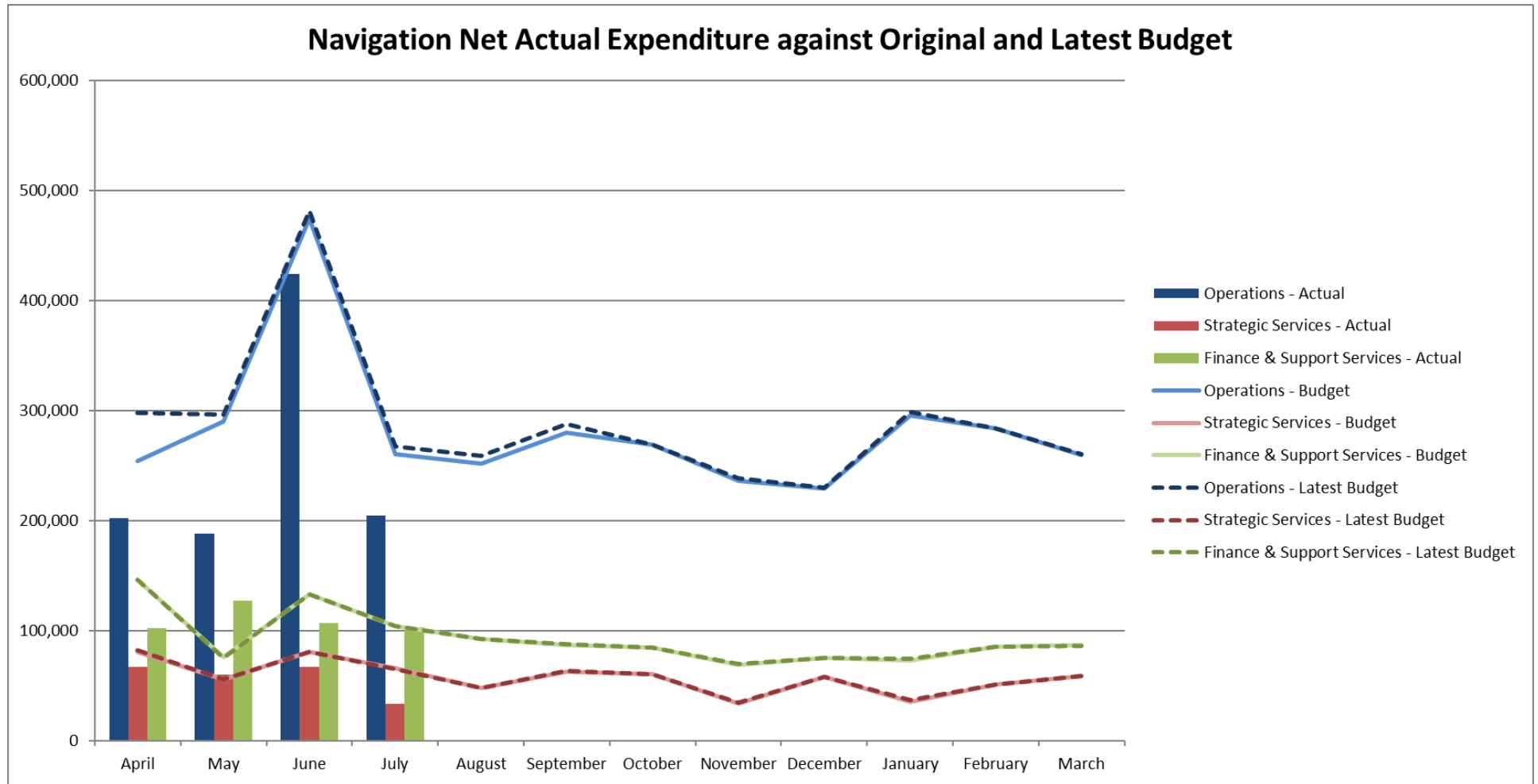
Date of report: 19 August 2025

Appendix 1 – Navigation actual income and expenditure charts to 31 July 2025

Appendix 2 – Financial monitor: Navigation income and expenditure 2025/26

Appendix 1 – Navigation actual income and expenditure charts to 31 July 2025





Appendix 2 – Financial monitor: Navigation income and expenditure 2025/26

Table 1

Income

| Row Labels | Original budget (Navigation) £ | Budget adjustments (Navigation) £ | Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £ |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Total Income | (4,697,800) | (28,500) | (4,726,300) | (4,623,816) | - 102,484 |
| National Park Grant | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hire Craft Tolls | (1,489,000) | 0 | (1,489,000) | (1,454,558) | - 34,442 |
| Private Craft Tolls | (3,057,000) | 0 | (3,057,000) | (2,988,958) | - 68,042 |
| Short Visit Tolls | (63,540) | 0 | (63,540) | (63,540) | + 0 |
| Other Toll Income | (33,260) | 0 | (33,260) | (33,260) | + 0 |
| Interest | (55,000) | (28,500) | (83,500) | (83,500) | + 0 |

Table 2

Operations

| Row Labels | Original budget (Navigation) £ | Budget adjustments (Navigation) £ | Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £ |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Total Operations | 3,520,590 | 79,014 | 3,599,603 | 3,534,205 | + 65,398 |
| Construction and Maintenance Salaries | 984,776 | 3,622 | 988,397 | 943,040 | + 45,357 |

| Row Labels | Original budget (Navigation) £ | Budget adjustments (Navigation) £ | Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £ |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Salaries | 984,776 | 3,622 | 988,397 | 943,040 | + 45,357 |
| Expenditure | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Equipment, Vehicles & Vessels | 473,550 | 0 | 473,550 | 473,550 | + 0 |
| Income | (840) | 0 | (840) | (840) | + 0 |
| Expenditure | 474,390 | 0 | 474,390 | 474,390 | + 0 |
| Water Management | 95,780 | 0 | 95,780 | 95,780 | + 0 |
| Expenditure | 95,780 | 0 | 95,780 | 95,780 | + 0 |
| Land Management | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Income | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Expenditure | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Practical Maintenance | 400,575 | 0 | 400,575 | 400,575 | + 0 |
| Income | (26,425) | (38,025) | (64,450) | (64,450) | + 0 |
| Expenditure | 427,000 | 38,025 | 465,025 | 465,025 | + 0 |
| Waterways and Recreation Strategy | 32,650 | 10 | 32,660 | 20,035 | + 12,625 |
| Income | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Salaries | 26,250 | 10 | 26,260 | 13,635 | + 12,625 |
| Expenditure | 6,400 | 0 | 6,400 | 6,400 | + 0 |
| Ranger Services | 1,141,288 | 75,776 | 1,217,064 | 1,210,968 | + 6,096 |

| Row Labels | Original budget (Navigation) £ | Budget adjustments (Navigation) £ | Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £ |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Income | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Salaries | 796,888 | 776 | 797,664 | 791,568 | + 6,096 |
| Expenditure | 344,200 | 75,000 | 419,200 | 419,200 | + 0 |
| Pension Payments | 200 | 0 | 200 | 200 | + 0 |
| Safety | 98,586 | 518 | 99,104 | 98,558 | + 546 |
| Income | (750) | 0 | (750) | (750) | + 0 |
| Salaries | 75,386 | 518 | 75,904 | 75,358 | + 546 |
| Expenditure | 23,950 | 0 | 23,950 | 23,950 | + 0 |
| Premises | 195,243 | 0 | 195,243 | 195,243 | + 0 |
| Income | (1,750) | 0 | (1,750) | (1,750) | + 0 |
| Expenditure | 196,993 | 0 | 196,993 | 196,993 | + 0 |
| Operations Management and Administration | 96,792 | (912) | 95,880 | 95,106 | + 774 |
| Salaries | 95,592 | (912) | 94,680 | 93,906 | + 774 |
| Expenditure | 1,200 | 0 | 1,200 | 1,200 | + 0 |
| Project Funding | 1,350 | 0 | 1,350 | 1,350 | + 0 |
| Pension Payments | 1,350 | 0 | 1,350 | 1,350 | + 0 |

Table 3
Strategic Services

| Row Labels | Original budget (Navigation) £ | Budget adjustments (Navigation) £ | Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £ |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Total Strategic Services | 505,994 | (2,070) | 503,925 | 473,197 | + 30,728 |
| Development Management | 5,329 | 0 | 5,329 | 5,287 | + 41 |
| Income | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Salaries | 5,329 | 0 | 5,329 | 5,287 | + 41 |
| Expenditure | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Pension Payments | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Strategy and Projects Salaries | 29,759 | 0 | 29,759 | 29,680 | + 79 |
| Income | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Salaries | 29,759 | 0 | 29,759 | 29,680 | + 79 |
| Expenditure | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Strategy and Projects | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Expenditure | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Biodiversity Strategy | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Expenditure | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Human Resources | 85,786 | 720 | 86,506 | 86,088 | + 418 |
| Salaries | 54,106 | 0 | 54,106 | 53,688 | + 418 |

| Row Labels | Original budget (Navigation) £ | Budget adjustments (Navigation) £ | Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £ |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Expenditure | 31,680 | 720 | 32,400 | 32,400 | + 0 |
| Volunteers | 18,914 | 0 | 18,914 | 18,792 | + 122 |
| Salaries | 15,269 | 0 | 15,269 | 15,147 | + 122 |
| Expenditure | 3,645 | 0 | 3,645 | 3,645 | + 0 |
| Communications | 100,510 | (954) | 99,556 | 81,667 | + 17,889 |
| Income | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Salaries | 89,965 | (954) | 89,011 | 71,122 | + 17,889 |
| Expenditure | 10,545 | 0 | 10,545 | 10,545 | + 0 |
| Visitor Centres and Yacht Stations | 223,035 | (1,836) | 221,199 | 219,079 | + 2,120 |
| Income | (153,960) | 0 | (153,960) | (153,960) | + 0 |
| Salaries | 308,415 | (1,836) | 306,579 | 304,459 | + 2,120 |
| Expenditure | 68,580 | 0 | 68,580 | 68,580 | + 0 |
| Strategic Services Management and Administration | 42,663 | 0 | 42,663 | 32,604 | + 10,059 |
| Salaries | 42,213 | 0 | 42,213 | 32,154 | + 10,059 |
| Expenditure | 450 | 0 | 450 | 450 | + 0 |

Table 4

Finance and Support Services

| Row Labels | Original budget (Navigation) £ | Budget adjustments (Navigation) £ | Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £ |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Total Finance & Support Services | 1,161,699 | 10,690 | 1,172,389 | 1,162,707 | + 9,682 |
| National Park Grant | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Expenditure | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | + 0 |
| Legal | 35,000 | 0 | 35,000 | 35,000 | + 0 |
| Income | (5,000) | 0 | (5,000) | (5,000) | + 0 |
| Expenditure | 40,000 | 0 | 40,000 | 40,000 | + 0 |
| Governance | 139,105 | (4,004) | 135,101 | 132,135 | + 2,966 |
| Salaries | 107,052 | (4,004) | 103,048 | 100,082 | + 2,966 |
| Expenditure | 32,053 | 0 | 32,053 | 32,053 | + 0 |
| Chief Executive | 55,394 | 11,871 | 67,265 | 66,842 | + 423 |
| Salaries | 55,196 | 0 | 55,196 | 54,773 | + 423 |
| Expenditure | 198 | 11,871 | 12,069 | 12,069 | + 0 |
| Asset Management | 75,158 | 0 | 75,158 | 74,978 | + 180 |
| Income | (5,135) | 0 | (5,135) | (5,135) | + 0 |
| Salaries | 23,058 | 0 | 23,058 | 22,878 | + 180 |

| Row Labels | Original budget (Navigation) £ | Budget adjustments (Navigation) £ | Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £ |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Expenditure | 57,235 | 0 | 57,235 | 57,235 | + 0 |
| Finance and Insurance | 332,136 | 2,783 | 334,919 | 333,614 | + 1,305 |
| Salaries | 164,164 | 2,783 | 166,947 | 165,642 | + 1,305 |
| Expenditure | 167,972 | 0 | 167,972 | 167,972 | + 0 |
| Collection of Tolls | 236,570 | 40 | 236,610 | 232,780 | + 3,830 |
| Salaries | 224,070 | 40 | 224,110 | 220,280 | + 3,830 |
| Expenditure | 12,500 | 0 | 12,500 | 12,500 | + 0 |
| ICT | 239,036 | 0 | 239,036 | 238,057 | + 979 |
| Salaries | 125,352 | 0 | 125,352 | 124,373 | + 979 |
| Expenditure | 113,684 | 0 | 113,684 | 113,684 | + 0 |
| Premises – Head Office | 49,300 | 0 | 49,300 | 49,300 | + 0 |
| Expenditure | 49,300 | 0 | 49,300 | 49,300 | + 0 |

Table 5

Corporate items

| Row Labels | Original budget (Navigation) £ | Budget adjustments (Navigation) £ | Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £ |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Total Corporate Items | 4,116 | 0 | 4,116 | 4,116 | + 0 |
| Corporate Items | 4,116 | 0 | 4,116 | 4,116 | + 0 |
| Expenditure | 4,116 | 0 | 4,116 | 4,116 | + 0 |

Table 6

Contributions from earmarked reserves

| Row Labels | Original budget (Navigation) £ | Budget adjustments (Navigation) £ | Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £ |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Total contributions from Earmarked Reserves | (486,127) | 0 | (486,127) | (486,127) | + 0 |
| Earmarked Reserves | (486,127) | 0 | (486,127) | (486,127) | + 0 |
| Expenditure | (486,127) | 0 | (486,127) | (486,127) | + 0 |

Table 7

Net (Surplus) / Deficit

| Row Labels | Original budget (Navigation) £ | Budget adjustments (Navigation) £ | Latest Available Budget (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn (Navigation) £ | Forecast outturn variance (Navigation) £ |
|--------------------|---|--|---|--|---|
| Grand Total | 8,472 | 59,134 | 67,606 | 64,282 | + 3,324 |

Navigation Committee

04 September 2025

Agenda item number 9

Construction Maintenance and Ecology work programme update

Report by Head of Construction, Maintenance & Ecology, and Ecology & Design Manager

Purpose

To provide the Committee with an update on the Authority's management activities to maintain public navigation, develop mooring facilities for public use and demonstrate the effective use of available resources in managing the Broads waterways.

Broads Plan context

C1: Maintain navigation water depths to defined specifications, reduce sediment input, and dispose of dredged material in sustainable and beneficial ways.

C2: Maintain existing navigation water space and develop appropriate opportunities to extend access for various types of craft.

C3: Manage water plants, riverside trees and scrub, and seek resources to increase operational targets.

C4: Maintain and improve safety and security standards and user behaviour on the waterways

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The detailed breakdown in Appendix 1 gives the figures and volumes for the current dredging programme for 2025/26 (April 2025 to end July 2025). A total of 6,390 m³ of dredged sediment has been removed from the prioritised sites. This figure represents 23% of the programmed target of 27,380 m³ for the year.
- 1.2. Dredging work completed so far in 2025/26 includes the marked channel in Rockland Broad; removal of a bar at the mouth of Hardley Dyke; the up and downstream dykes connecting Bargate Broad to the main river, and within the nominal channel between the two dykes across the southern edge of Bargate Broad. Prior to the first water plant cut of the year at Bargate, yellow buoys will be placed to mark the maintained channel. Appendix 2 shows that the duration of work completed to date this year broadly fits within expectations for this point in the year. The allocation labelled as Corporate is the one area with greater actual time dedicated to it in the first four months of the year. This is largely down to some long-term sickness and the two operations technician posts being deleted as part of this year's staffing restructure in response to reduced National Park Grant funding from Defra.
- 1.3. Another project, finished by the end of July 2025, involved dredging the River Yare between Postwick Viaduct and Thorpe Rail Bridge. The dredged material was placed in lagoons to dry and will later be used by the Environment Agency to strengthen sections of the floodbank around Postwick Marshes.
- 1.4. In another collaborative project for the Environment Agency, the Authority's staff and equipment were contracted via a Public Sector Co-operation Agreement, alongside a team from the Water Management Alliance (Broads IDB team). The project was to excavate dry dredging spoil from the Authority's land at Geldeston on the River Waveney and re-use it for floodbank maintenance. Wherries transported the material down river to be incorporated into low points where the floodbank had settled. The bank crest height has now been raised to the Agency's design standards, which will prevent water over-topping into the drained marshland behind the bank. This work has also helped to prevent deterioration of a riverside public right of way. The Authority's land has been restored to marsh level and can be used in the future to receive more dredged sediment, as and when required.
- 1.5. Appendices 3 and 4 give the final year end summary for all Navigation work for 2024/25 and the final figures and volumes for last year's dredging programme for 2024/25 (April 2024 to end March 2025). A total of 23,800 m³ of dredged sediment was removed from the prioritised sites. This figure represents 65% of the programmed target of 36,360 m³ for the year. The key reasons for the actual dredge volume and total cost being less than

predicted was due to sections of work being removed in-year from the active programme (including Bridge Broad from the River Bure and Catfield Dyke from the Upper Thurne), less staff time was therefore spent on dredge projects and in some areas, less sediment dredged than predicted. The overall allocation of operational staff time on priority Navigation activities was maintained at 60%, with National Park activities at 40%. Within the Navigation allocation, a greater than planned amount of time was spent on “other navigation works” which included activities like removal and disposal of wrecked/abandoned vessels and the change to in-house delivery of the Breydon marker post installation.

2. Maintaining safe public mooring facilities

- 2.1. Since the start of the season, the Authority has renegotiated the lease and opened the previous 24 hour mooring site at Aldeby on the River Waveney. Lease negotiations were less favourable at Rockland Staithe with annual rates and terms being outside the parameters agreed by the Navigation Committee. This site is no longer managed by the Authority and we have removed all Authority signage and the two electric charge points. The landowners have taken back the management of the moorings.
- 2.2. The new scrollable and zoomable webmap of all the Authority’s 24 hour, emergency, layby and demasting moorings has been produced and is available here <https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/boating/facilities/moorings>. Users of the website can now filter based on criteria such as electric charging points, water, whether charges are applicable etc. and can view the moorings in both map and list format.
- 2.3. For the more detailed reports on the minor mooring maintenance work completed, these are included in the Chief Executive’s regular public [Broads Briefings](#).

3. Water Plant Management

- 3.1. The first two cuts of the year has already been carried out across the Upper Thurne at Somerton Dyke and Hickling Broad. The growth of water plants early in the season is promoted by factors such as water quality influencing the clarity of water (e.g. phosphate and nitrate pollution stimulating microscopic algae) and the weather conditions (sunshine and favourable temperatures).
- 3.2. Overall, this past winter has been mild. Met Office data for Coltishall shows only three dates from October 2024 to March 2025 when minimum air temperature dropped below 0°C. The winter of 2024/25 in northeast Norfolk, UK, was notably milder compared to historical averages, aligning with broader regional and national trends. East Anglia experienced its warmest February on record, with a mean temperature of 8.2°C, surpassing the previous record of 7.6°C set in 1990 (see background papers for link).
- 3.3. Based on the mild winter in 2024/25 and the sunny and warm spring 2025, water plant growth is expected to be at or above predicted levels, if other factors such as water

quality are favourable. The amount of water plant growth and the time taken to manage it will be reviewed at the end of the growth season.

- 3.4. As reported at the last Navigation Committee and include in Appendix 2, 225 workdays have been allocated for Operations Technicians to carry out water plant management in 2025. Rangers continue to feedback on priority areas and when water plant growth is causing issues for navigation. Appendix 2 will be updated at each Navigation Committee, to report the actual days spent on the various waterways management activities, including water plant management.

4. Channel markers

- 4.1. The planned removal of the timbers at Turntide Jetty has had to be postponed until September due to a mechanical issue and delays in obtaining the parts for our largest tug, which has meant the initially planned time window has been missed. Regular checks on the structure will be carried out over the summer to ensure any safety issues that may arise are identified and managed accordingly. All current channel markers in place around Turntide Jetty shall remain unaltered until works have been completed.

5. Our resources

- 5.1. Capital items procured as part of the Defra additional grant in 2024/25 will be used to support our on-going waterways management activities. The most significant, is a new Schwing Stetter SP2800 concrete pump. This replaces our previous Putzmeister pump, but with greater engine capacity, for smoother and effective running, and improved features for easier routine maintenance. The Schwing pump will be used to move dredged sediment from the riverside to locations up to 200 m from the water's edge, allowing a range of sediment re-use options to be realised.

Author: Dan Hoare & Sue Stephenson

Date of report: 20 August 2025

Background papers: [Met Office seasonal assessment Winter 2025](#)

[Broads Plan](#) strategic objectives: C1, C2, C3, C4

Appendix 1 – Annual dredging progress 2025/26 (to end July 2025)

Appendix 2 - Operational staff time spent on all work types 2025/26 (to end July 2025)

Appendix 3 – Final annual dredging figures 2024/25 (to end March 2025)

Appendix 4 - Final operational staff time spent on all work types 2024/25 (to end March 2025)

Appendix 1– Annual dredging progress 2025/26 (to end July 2025)

| Project title Dredge site and sediment re-use location | Active Broads Authority dredging weeks completed/ planned | Planned volume removed m³ | Actual volume removed m³ | Planned annual project cost¹ | Actual project cost |
|--|--|---|--|--|------------------------------------|
| River Yare Bargate Broad | 8/8 | 2,400 | 1,800 | £56,260 | £54,730 |
| <i>Postwick Marshes re-use site – started in 2024/25, completed in 2025/26</i> | | | | | |
| River Yare Postwick Viaduct to Trowse Swing Bridge | 9/9 | 6,480 | 4,230 | £74,880 | £55,160 |
| <i>Postwick Marshes re-use site - complete</i> | | | | | |
| River Yare Hardley Dyke | - | - | 170 | - | - |
| River Thurne | | | | | |
| Hickling channel | 0/8 | 6,000 | 0 | £175,420 | £880 |
| Martham & Somerton Boat Dykes | 0/4 | 1,300 | 0 | | |
| Somerton to Candle Dyke | 0/10 | 6,200 | 0 | | |
| <i>Hickling channel (Chara Bay re-use site) – October to November Martham & Somerton Boat Dykes (sidecast) – November Somerton to Candle Dyke (Chara Bay re-use site) – December to February</i> | | | | | |
| River Bure Wroxham Broad | 0/5 | 3,000 | 0 | £33,940 | £1,900 |
| <i>Wroxham Island – February to March</i> | | | | | |
| River Bure Lower reaches | 0/4 | 5,000 | 0 | £35,270 | £200 |
| <i>Cutter suction head dredging on ebb tide – January to February</i> | | | | | |
| River Bure Mid-Bure | - | - | - | £3,000 | 0 |
| <i>Lagoon preparation costs</i> | | | | | |
| Site restoration | - | - | - | - | £5,200 |

| Project title Dredge site and sediment re-use location | Active Broads Authority dredging weeks completed/ planned | Planned volume removed m³ | Actual volume removed m³ | Planned annual project cost¹ | Actual project cost |
|---|--|---|--|--|------------------------------------|
| Future site preparation Survey, mitigation & set- up | - | - | - | - | £1,840 |
| Dredging support activities | - | - | - | - | £9,280 |
| Total | 20/45 | 27,380 | 6,200 | £378,770 | £121,190 |

Appendix 2 – Operational staff time spent on all work types 2025/26 (update to end July 2025)

| Work type | Planned - Days | Planned - % of annual total days | Actual - Days | Actual - % completed |
|---|-------------------------------|---|------------------------------|---|
| Navigation (60%) | 2,664 | 60 | 1,059 | 24 |
| <i>Italics are proportion within Navigation</i> | | | | |
| <i>Dredging</i> | <i>1068</i> | <i>40</i> | <i>413</i> | <i>16</i> |
| <i>Mooring maintenance & repairs</i> | <i>687</i> | <i>26</i> | <i>188</i> | <i>7</i> |
| <i>Riverside tree management</i> | <i>50</i> | <i>2</i> | <i>7</i> | <i>-</i> |
| <i>Water plant cutting</i> | <i>225</i> | <i>8</i> | <i>122</i> | <i>46</i> |
| <i>Other navigation works¹</i> | <i>184</i> | <i>7</i> | <i>95</i> | <i>4</i> |
| <i>Corporate allocation ²</i> | <i>450</i> | <i>17</i> | <i>234</i> | <i>9</i> |
| Recreation (10%)³ | 444 | 10 | 126 | 3 |
| Conservation (30%)⁴ | 1,332 | 30 | 284 | 6 |
| Total | 4,440 | 100 | 1,469 | 33 |

1 – includes raising & disposal of wrecks, channel markers & buoys, gaugeboards & signage

2 – includes premises & equipment maintenance, training, sickness & gaps in recruitment.

3 - National Park funded work to facilitate public access and visitor services.

4 – National Park funded work to carry out priority fen management and other biodiversity restoration projects

Appendix 3 – Final annual dredging figures 2024/25 (to end March 2025)

| Project title Dredge site and sediment re-use location | Active Broads Authority dredging weeks completed/ planned | Planned volume removed m³ | Actual volume removed m³ | Planned annual project cost¹ | Actual project cost |
|---|--|---|--|--|------------------------------------|
| River Bure (continuation from 2023/24) Juby's Farm to Hoveton Viaduct | 28/27 | 17,900 | 12,810 | £190,710 | £198,870 |
| <i>Lagoon re-use site NB: Planned volume includes Bridge Broad (2,870m³) which was removed from the work programme</i> | | | | | |
| River Yare Rockland Broad (channels & dykes) | 17/26 | 13,500 | 10,380 | £190,020 | £101,490 |
| <i>Rockland Short Dyke & Postwick Marshes re-use sites & Postwick Tip. Running December to March</i> | | | | | |
| River Ant Stalham Dyke | 1/3 | 830 | 250 | £37,140 | £11,360 |
| <i>Hunsett Mill re-use site; work completed December 2024</i> | | | | | |
| River Yare Bargate Broad | 3/4 | 2,400 | 360 | £45,150 | £2,820 |
| <i>Postwick Marshes re-use & Postwick Tip. Running in February 2025 concurrently with Rockland dredging</i> | | | | | |
| River Thurne Catfield Dyke | 0/4 | 2,000 | 0 | £27,350 | £1,030 |
| <i>Deferred to 2025/26 due to delays in completing the Upper Bure project</i> | | | | | |
| Site restoration | - | - | - | - | £3,750 |
| Future site preparation Survey, mitigation & set-up | - | - | - | - | £3,300 |
| Dredging support activities | - | - | - | - | £5,500 |
| Total | 46/64 | 36,630 | 23,800 | 490,370 | 328,120 |

Appendix 4 – Final operational staff time spent on all work types 2024/25 (to end March 2025).

| Work type | Planned - Days | Planned - % of annual total | Actual - Days | Actual - % of completed |
|---|-------------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|
| Navigation (70%) | 3,372 | 70 | 3,349 | 70 |
| <i>Italics are proportion within Navigation</i> | | | | |
| <i>Dredging</i> | <i>1709</i> | <i>51</i> | <i>1379</i> | <i>41</i> |
| <i>Mooring maintenance & repairs</i> | <i>601</i> | <i>18</i> | <i>552</i> | <i>16</i> |
| <i>Riverside tree management</i> | <i>43</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>78</i> | <i>2</i> |
| <i>Water plant cutting</i> | <i>266</i> | <i>8</i> | <i>227</i> | <i>7</i> |
| <i>Other navigation works ¹</i> | <i>228</i> | <i>7</i> | <i>354</i> | <i>11</i> |
| <i>Corporate allocation ²</i> | <i>525</i> | <i>15</i> | <i>759</i> | <i>23</i> |
| Recreation (10%) ³ | 482 | 10 | 438 | 9 |
| Conservation (20%) ⁴ | 963 | 20 | 1,015 | 21 |
| Total | 4,817 | 100 | 4,802 | 100 |

1 – includes raising & disposal of wrecks, channel markers & buoys, gaugeboards & signage

2 – includes premises & equipment maintenance, training, sickness & gaps in recruitment.

3 - National Park funded work to facilitate public access and visitor services.

4 – National Park funded work to carry out priority fen management and other biodiversity restoration projects

Navigation Committee

04 September 2025

Agenda item number 10

Water depth specifications

Report by Head of Construction, Maintenance & Ecology

Purpose

This report outlines the proposed process to review the existing Waterways Specifications so that they remain fit for purpose in guiding the maintenance and navigability of the Broads' waterways. This review process and stakeholder feedback will identify any practical or technical amendments needed to reflect current usage or environmental conditions. The timeline will be in line with the refresh of the next five-year Action Plan due to be completed by March 2027.

Broads Plan context

This review contributes directly to strategic actions C1 and C2 of the Broads Plan 2022–27, which focus on maintaining defined navigation depths, reducing sediment input, and improving access for a range of craft. It also supports A2 by helping ensure dredging operations are efficient and environmentally responsible, and B1 through alignment with lake and sediment management practices. The process will inform future planning by identifying areas where specifications can be clarified or adjusted to reflect actual usage, ecological constraints, and stakeholder priorities. In doing so, it helps deliver a more inclusive, resilient, and well-maintained navigation network across the Broads.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Broads Authority maintains a set of Waterways Specifications that define the intended navigable dimensions (dredge depths) and associated maintenance standards for the public navigation area. These specifications are a key operational tool, enabling targeted dredging, vegetation control, and channel marking in alignment with strategic objectives. See section 3.2.2. in [Broads-Authority.gov.uk/Waterways-Management-Strategy-Action-Plan-2022-27.pdf](https://broads-authority.gov.uk/Waterways-Management-Strategy-Action-Plan-2022-27.pdf)
- 1.2. To assist refresh and development of the next five-year phase of the Action Plan 2027/28 – 2031/32, a review is required to verify the ongoing relevance of the existing waterway specifications. The scope of the review will be to identify any minor adjustments to depths and streamline prioritisation, so that maximum user benefit can be obtained from the resources dedicated to the maintenance of the Broads navigable waterways. This report seeks feedback on the approach to reviewing Waterways Specifications for the different identifiable sections of the Broads navigation.

2. Approach

The review will follow a three-part approach:

2.1. Document Review and Mapping

- Cross-checking current specifications against objectives in the Waterways Management Strategy
- Correct historical depth or boundary errors
- Identify areas where Waterways Specification depths can be harmonised/simplified in adjacent stretches of the navigation
- Refresh and review the mapping data to show relative activity usage, as captured through mobile phone location data. See previous [Waterways Compliance report](#) to Navigation Committee, September 2024.
- Review all incident reports logged with Broads Control, gain Ranger team feedback, and review internal operational notes from the past three years.

2.2. Targeted Stakeholder Engagement. Conducted interviews with:

- Internal - Ranger team (user safety perspective) and Ecology & Design team (environmental concerns and licensing requirements)
- External stakeholders to be invited to 1-1 discussions with supporting information shared in advance - Navigation Committee members; Broads Hire Boat Federation; NSBA; individual sailing clubs with mainly deeper draft vessels
- Results of the of the survey will be presented to the Navigation Committee for consideration.

2.3. Technical and Environmental Screening

- Analysis of recent bathymetric and sediment accumulation information to double-check for any unforeseen negative impacts from varying the Waterways Specification at any individual location
- Review channel obstructions, reported pinch points, and any recurring deviations from stated specifications.

2.4. The review will start in earnest in 2026/27 as staff resource is already committed through 2025/26. A more detailed timeline to meet the objectives above will be confirmed later in 2025.

3. Effectiveness of the Waterways Specification depths

- 3.1. The specifications continue to provide an effective baseline for navigable maintenance and operational planning. Most stakeholders view them as useful and sufficiently flexible in practice, with no calls for fundamental redesign of the process.
- 3.2. However, some specific areas needing clarification or light amendment includes; where localised flexibility should be acknowledged where environmental or heritage constraints restrict full compliance (e.g. narrowness in historic channels, channels where tree growth is an accepted feature over the water space, areas of natural gravel or peat substrate that are beyond the scope of maintenance dredging); and updating the specification depth maps to increase transparency and public understanding.

4. Financial implications

- 4.1. Review of Waterways Specification depths for certain areas aims to focus effort in the most beneficial locations. Whilst this doesn't directly save money, it does ensure that maximum benefit for the widest range and number of waterways users is achieved.
- 4.2. By aligning dredging priorities with actual usage patterns and environmental constraints, the review helps reduce the risk of over-specification and ensures maintenance budgets are directed where they deliver the greatest public and ecological return. This approach also supports more predictable work programming, aiding long-term financial planning and resource allocation

5. Risk implications

- 5.1. There's a slight risk that dredging in parts of the Broads that aren't often used could lead to spending time and money achieving depths that most boaters don't actually need. This could mean resources are used inefficiently, without clear benefits for the majority of users.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. The Waterways Specifications remain broadly sound, practical, and in alignment with the Waterways Management Strategy. This review sets out a transparent and inclusive

process to identify minor refinements to improve clarity and user understanding. This specification depth review may also highlight potential issues for more detailed consideration during the next scheduled strategic review cycle, such as total volumes to be dredged and their locations, requirement for sites for the beneficial re-use of dredged arisings and potential additional work programming priorities through to March 2032.

Author: Dan Hoare

Date of report: 20 August 2025

Background papers: [Broads-Authority.gov.uk/Waterways-Management-Strategy-Action-Plan-2022-27.pdf](https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/Waterways-Management-Strategy-Action-Plan-2022-27.pdf)

Waterways Compliance report, Navigation Committee, September 2024 www.broads-authority.gov.uk/Waterways-and-Compliance-report.pdf

[Broads Plan](#) strategic objectives: **A2** - Work towards making all Broads Authority operations carbon neutral by 2030 and carbon zero by 2040; **B1** - Restore, maintain and enhance lakes and use monitoring evidence to trial and implement further innovative lake restoration techniques; **C1** - Maintain navigation water depths to defined specifications, reduce sediment input and dispose of dredged material in sustainable and beneficial ways; **C2** - Maintain existing navigation water space and develop appropriate opportunities to extend access for various types of craft; **E1** - Improve the integrated network of access routes and points (with easier access for people with mobility and sensory needs), linked to visitor facilities

Navigation Committee

04 September 2025

Agenda item number 11

Management of Hickling Broad

Report by Head of Construction, Maintenance & Ecology

Purpose

This report provides an overview for the Navigation Committee of the Broads Authority's recent and ongoing management activities at Hickling Broad, including dredging, habitat restoration, and water plant cutting. It presents evidence from long-term monitoring and stakeholder engagement to inform future decision-making. The Authority's responsibility is to implement management measures which protect ecological integrity while maintaining access for recreational users.

Broads Plan context

The Broads Plan 2022–2027 sets out strategic actions to restore and enhance lake habitats (B1), maintain navigation depths and manage sediment sustainably (C1), and support inclusive access for various types of craft (C2). It also prioritises the management of water plants and riverside vegetation (C3), and the improvement of access routes and visitor facilities (E1). These actions underpin the Authority's approach to balancing ecological protection with recreational use at Hickling Broad. The Plan emphasises evidence-based restoration, stakeholder engagement, and long-term resilience across the Broads system.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Hickling Broad is one of the largest and most significant water bodies in the Broads system for its unique ecology and spectacular landscape setting. It supports rare aquatic plant communities, including the nationally scarce intermediate stonewort (*Chara intermedia*), and provides vital habitat for birds, fish, and invertebrates. The Broad is also a popular site for boating, sailing, and nature-based recreation, contributing to the local economy and community wellbeing.
- 1.2. However, Hickling faces a unique set of management challenges due to its shallow depth, water quality that is sensitive to nutrient inputs, and competing demands from different stakeholder groups and statutory requirements. Recent stakeholder feedback, particularly from the sailing community, has called for an expansion of the current water plant cutting regime to support access throughout the water plant growth season to an area and shape that meets competitive race sailing standards. These requests emphasise the need to balance ecological sensitivity with the socio-economic and recreational value of maintaining Hickling as a viable venue for competitive sailing. The Broads Authority's involvement in Hickling Broad is therefore driven by the need to balance ecological protection with public access and recreational use, in line with statutory duties, meeting the strategic aims of the Broads Plan and balancing delivery resource demands across the whole of the Broads executive area.
- 1.3. This report outlines the Authority's recent and ongoing practical management activities at Hickling Broad, including dredging, habitat restoration, water plant cutting, and experimental trials. It presents evidence from long-term monitoring and stakeholder engagement to inform future decision-making and ensure the Broad remains resilient, biodiverse, and accessible for generations to come.

2. Hickling Broad Enhancement Project

- 2.1. The Broads Authority identified the following strategic objective for 2015/16:

'Develop a long-term approach for the management of Hickling Broad, building on scientific evidence from the Broads Lake Review. In the short term, progress development of several smaller projects to meet immediate concerns.'

The Lake Review included a dossier on Hickling Broad, which reviewed all known data through case history. This led to several conclusions:

- Hickling cannot be viewed in isolation, and its water quality is highly responsive to the drainage and agricultural management within its general catchment, but especially of Horsey Mere
- External factors, which cannot be controlled, such as weather, tidal conditions and bird numbers, influence the effectiveness of any management activities

- Water plants respond to, but also promote changes in environmental parameters, so underlying change mechanisms can prove challenging to discern
- Although the mechanisms which originally switched the lake into a state of eutrophication are well understood, the decline of Chara and other vegetation species in Hickling in the early 2000's cannot be explained with any certainty. Therefore the confidence in the effectiveness of any form of management is low.

2.2. In September 2015, the Authority and partners identified the need for a strategic framework and a long-term approach for the management of Hickling Broad, building on scientific evidence from the 2014 Broads Lake Review. This led to the development of a vision statement for the area: -

“In-lake enhancement measures have resulted in refuge areas in quiet bays and sheltered areas, which provide conditions for water plants to flourish and a suitable habitat for fish and birds. These areas are managed for their habitat and wildlife conservation value. The marked channel is managed to maintain the agreed-upon depth and water plant cutting specifications, allowing boat users to access the staithe, local businesses, and enabling the local clubs to enjoy their recreational activities. Dredged material is deployed beneficially, with sediment used to restore eroded reed swamp, construct lakeside bank protection, and regularly top up bank restoration and island areas, as well as being spread to local arable land. Regular monitoring continues to build scientific understanding of the Broad and its management. Partnership research is continuing to gain an understanding of the ecological dynamics of *Prymnesium* and to run trials to reduce nutrient and salinity inputs from the catchment.”

2.3. It was envisaged that the outcomes from the delivery of the Hickling Broad Enhancement Project would include:

- Achievement of agreed waterway depths in the marked channel and identified priority areas, improving access to the staithe and local clubs and businesses
- Improved aquatic environments in sheltered bays, providing more reed bed, better water quality, water plants and higher numbers of water birds
- Beneficial reuse opportunities for dredged material
- Increased expertise and understanding in matters relating to water quality in Hickling Broad, including dealing with the risk to fish of the potentially toxic algae *Prymnesium parvum*
- Improved understanding by local communities, visitors and partners of the requirement to, and importance of, undertaking integrated water management projects to enhance the special qualities of the Broads.

2.4. Initial works to complete erosion protection at Hill Common and dredging at the north end of the marked channel (3,400 m³) were carried out in November 2015.

- 2.5. Over the winter of 2016/17, further dredging of the marked channel (5,100 m³) and restoration of the reedbed at Churchill's Bay and Studio Bay were completed.
- 2.6. Over the winter of 2017/18, dredging (mud pumping 4,900 m³ of sediment) of the marked channel in North Bay and the dyke towards the Parish Staithe was completed. The sediment was reused on adjacent arable land.

3. EU funded CANAPE project

- 3.1. The initial EU Interreg funded scheme investing in the Upper Thurne that the Broads Authority led was PRISMA (Promoting Integrated Sediment Management) which involved a significant project at Duck Broad. 15,000 m³ of sediment was dredged from Heigham Sound by cutter suction dredger. This sediment was reused in a constructed lagoon between the marked channel and Duck Broad, where reedbed was successfully established on the gabion basket structure.
- 3.2. Subsequently, between 2019-2022, the CANAPE (Creating a New Approach to Peatland Ecosystems) project was a European partnership between 14 organisations spread over Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, and Denmark, with an overall budget of €5,545,105, of which the Broads Authority's share was €1,459,016. The European Regional Development Fund covered 50% of the budget through the Interreg North Sea Region programme.
- 3.3. The key Broads Authority infrastructure project delivered through CANAPE was at Chara Bay, on the south side of Hickling Broad. The work at Chara Bay focused on lake edge protection measures and the regeneration of the lake edge reedbed using dredged sediment from the marked channel. The aim was to create resilient habitat with reduced impacts from erosion and nutrient enrichment to the lake, resulting in multiple benefits for biodiversity, climate change resilience and recreation.
- 3.4. The location of the Chara Bay project within Hickling Broad, was initially identified in a stakeholder workshop as part of a wider Hickling Broad Enhancement Project. The Chara Bay area has shown significant erosion of the lake edge since the 1940s.
- 3.5. Table 1 – Chara Bay work programme and key deliverables

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Winter 2018/19 | CANAPE project Year 1 – construction of 1 ha constructed reedswamp lagoon using geotextile tubes filled with dredged sediment from the marked channel and the approach to Catfield Dyke (5,800 m ³) |
| Winter 2019/20 | CANAPE project Year 2 – filling the Chara Bay lagoon with dredged sediment from the marked channel and Catfield Dyke (9,800 m ³) |
| Winter 2020/21 | CANAPE project Year 3 – filling the Chara Bay lagoon with dredged sediment from the marked channel (11,900 m ³) |

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Winter 2021/22 | Additional filling of the Chara Bay and Churchill's Bay lagoons with dredged sediment from River Thurne and Heigham Sound |
|-------------------|---|

- 3.6. A pre-planning consultation event was held at Hickling Barn on 26 April 2018, and was attended by 21 members of the public, including representatives of the Hickling Broad Sailing Club, Norfolk & Suffolk Boating Association and Hickling Windsurfing Club. The feedback received at the event regarding the proposed work was overwhelmingly positive. Norfolk Wildlife Trust, as the landowner, agreed to the design and location of the work ahead of the planning application submission in May 2018.
- 3.7. Several key lessons were learned and documented from this project including: the benefits of early consultation with stakeholders; the need to fine-tune initial geotechnical survey information; the hazard of grazing by feral geese when installing large numbers of young plants; and ensuring that the physical and logistical challenges of working in wetland conditions through the winter season are not under-estimated. The ability to adapt and manage change in a controlled manner was also a key conclusion.

4. Water plant management

- 4.1. In the marked channel of Hickling Broad, water plants are cut based on specific thresholds of impact on navigation and protection of ecological conditions. Cutting takes place within the marked channel of the main broad (and line-of-sight between the rows of wooden posts), the approach to Catfield Dyke and down the mooring dyke towards the Parish Staithe. The parameters, as set by Natural England, to be met before cutting are:-
- cutting only occurs between 1 June and 30 September, and;
 - the height of the water plants exceeds 50 cm within the marked channel, and;
 - water transparency (measured using a Secchi disc) is greater than 0.5 m in the channel, and;
 - more than 30 % of the broad is populated with water plants (as determined through a hydroacoustic survey across the whole broad in May), or;
 - less than 30 % of the broad is populated with water plants, but more than one third of the channel width contains water plants that exceed 50 cm in height.
- 4.2. The environmental standard operating procedures (ESOP) which guide the Authority's maintenance work contains a standard condition for designated sites, that water plants will not be cut any lower than 40 cm from the bed of the channel. This ensures some plant biomass and root networks are left in situ. See ESOP 1 – Cutting water plants [Environment standard operating procedures \(broads-authority.gov.uk\)](https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk). This ensures the biodiversity and sediment stabilisation benefits provided by water plants is preserved. The root network and plant biomass above the channel bed reduces

sediment mobilisation, by holding the sediment together and reducing the turbulence across the sediment surface.

- 4.3. Most areas of the marked channel are suitable for water plant growth, so a regular rotation of cutting is planned. However, water plants soon regrow when conditions are suitable, which leads to a requirement for multiple cuts which become more reactive as the season progresses. The marked channel in Hickling typically receives three or four cuts per year, the first always being prior to the Three Rivers Race in early June. Each cut typically takes about four days to complete at a cost to the Authority of roughly £1,300 per cut.
- 4.4. Disposal of cut water plants is focussed on two locations around Hickling Broad, identified with the landowner Norfolk Wildlife Trust. The main and most frequently used location is the northern bank of Catfield Dyke. In periods when the volume of cut material for disposal has been very large, an area on the south side of Deep Dyke, between Hickling Broad and Heigham Sound has been used. Piles of cut material are limited to being no higher than 1 m after final disposal. Larger volumes of rotting material pose an environmental hazard of leaching high biological oxygen demand liquid back into the watercourse, which is a risk for invertebrates and fish. Physical space around the edge of Hickling Broad for the disposal of cut plants is limited, as there are few accessible hard edges, which are also of low biodiversity value.
- 4.5. The June 2023 report to the Navigation Committee on Water Plant Management details the statutory responsibilities of the Authority and Natural England in terms of assenting water plant management operations in the Upper Thurne Broads & Marshes SSSI, Broads SAC and Broadland SPA.

5. Experimental cutting of stoneworts

- 5.1. Hickling Broad is the site with the most current challenge in terms of multiple users experiencing difficulties with, or constraints on, their intended activities due to the abundant growth of water plants, predominantly stoneworts. Hickling Broad Sailing Club has experienced reduced participation in some events in the plant growth season; some day-boat operators instruct hirers not to venture upstream of Potter Heigham Bridge; and several boatyards have reported regular callouts to Hickling Broad to recover hired vessels that have lost propulsion due to entanglement with water plants.
- 5.2. The most abundant species currently growing in Hickling Broad is a species called intermediate stonewort. This is a very rare native species that within the UK only grows in the broads of the Upper Thurne. As such, the landowner Norfolk Wildlife Trust and the statutory bodies, Natural England, and the Environment Agency, have objectives to protect this species and the associated community of other water plants that grow alongside it.
- 5.3. In 2017, the Authority initiated a trial of cutting stonewort outside the marked channel to establish the impacts of cutting on plant growth. The trial followed consultation with

Natural England, who granted assent for the limited cutting, based on a Habitat Regulations Assessment that the Authority was required to prepare. The trial area was monitored for three years to follow the impacts of the cutting event. The draft report was first presented to the Upper Thurne Working Group, as the key stakeholders with a direct interest in the trial and its findings. Following feedback from the group and a peer review process, the report was finalised and is presented as Appendix 1 [Experimental cutting of stonewort in Hickling-Broad 2017-2019.pdf](#) to the 8 June 2023 Navigation Committee report on [Water Plant Management](#).

- 5.4. In summary, the conclusions in the report are that cutting of the stoneworts had an immediate and lasting effect on plant height and cover. The checkerboard design of the initial “cut and “non-cut” plots as separate treatments was shown to be a weakness in the experimental design. However, the data from these two plot types were successfully combined and compared to “control” plots. The control plots were near the treatments, but through robust statistical analysis of plant height and cover, their location and function as a control was shown to be reliable.
- 5.5. The single cutting event did affect the mean height of water plants during the study period. The hypothesis that cutting would result in a reduction in overall plant height is supported by statistically significant differences in plant height for a time-limited duration of one growth season.
- 5.6. Percentage cover of plants was significantly lower in the treatment plots for two seasons following the cutting event. By the third season, the differences in cover were no longer apparent. The hypothesis that cutting would result in a reduction in overall plant cover is supported by statistically significant differences for a duration of two growth seasons.
- 5.7. In the treatment plots, dominance by stonewort species, particularly *Chara intermedia*, had changed two years after cutting, to a more even mix of stoneworts and other vascular plants, mainly holly-leaved-naiad and spiked water milfoil. The hypothesis that cutting would result in a decrease in charophyte prevalence within the plant community is not statistically significant, but the data gathered shows that the plant community in cut plots was more diverse, and contained less stonewort, than in control areas.

6. Analysis of long-term water quality and water plant trends

- 6.1. In 2016 the Authority collaborated with a group of scientists to generate a series of Lake Review’s of available environmental and ecological information for specific broads, including Hickling Broad, see www.broads-authority.gov.uk/water-conservation-reports/ .
- 6.2. A refresh of the Hickling Broad Lake Review (2025) has been completed using recent water quality and environmental data up to the end of 2024. This refresh is now available here www.broads-authority.gov.uk/Hickling-Broad-Dossier-1980-2024.pdf.

Analysis of long-term monitoring data and recent survey work confirms that Hickling Broad continues to support extensive growth of submerged aquatic plants, with *Chara intermedia* remaining the dominant species across much of the open water area. The resurgence of *Chara* since 2019 has coincided with improved water clarity and reduced nutrient concentrations, particularly total phosphorus and suspended solids. These conditions have supported the expansion of macrophyte beds, with peak coverage observed in 2022.

- 6.3. The current plant community is characterised by high biomass and structural complexity, contributing to water clarity, sediment stability, nutrient cycling, and suppression of phytoplankton. While stonewort dominance remains strong, other species, including spiked water milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*), holly-leaved naiad (*Najas marina*), and fine-leaved pondweeds, are present in lower abundance, particularly in marginal areas and transitional zones between dense stonewort beds.
- 6.4. Sediment removal from Hickling Broad was undertaken between 2015 and 2021, a period during which both total phosphorus concentrations declined, and stonewort abundance increased. Given the overlap in timing, it is difficult to isolate the specific effect of sediment removal. However, it can be concluded that the removal had no detrimental impact on the redevelopment of stonewort beds outside the marked channel. Moreover, trend analysis shows a continued decline in total phosphorus in Hickling, reaching the lowest levels recorded suggesting that sediment removal may have contributed positively to these improvements by removing a nutrient store.
- 6.5. Sediment removal (2015–2021) coincided with falling phosphorus levels and increased stonewort abundance. Although its exact impact is hard to separate from other factors, there was no harm to plant recovery, and it likely contributed to nutrient reduction by removing stored phosphorus.
- 6.6. By the end of 2024, monitoring confirmed that Hickling Broad continues to support extensive submerged plant growth, with *Chara intermedia* dominant since its resurgence in 2019. This has been linked to clearer water, lower phosphorus levels, and fewer suspended solids, with peak plant coverage observed in 2022. The dense macrophyte beds improve water clarity, stabilise sediments, and help control nutrients and algae, while other aquatic species occur in smaller numbers at the margins.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1. Since the initial dredging project which kicked off the Hickling Broad Enhancement Project in 2015 through to the end of 2022 and the end of the CANAPE project, the Authority has spent a total of £1,193,570 dredging and re-using the sediment to restore and create reed swamp habitats (see Table 2).
- 7.2. Annual internal costs for operating the water plant harvester solely in the marked channel of Hickling Broad has been £3,110 (2022), £4,810 (2023) and £4,250 (2024).

Typical cost for each individual cut of the marked channel has been about £1,200. Cutting data has only been captured for Hickling Broad as a single location within the wider Upper Thurne system since 2022. Differences in cost between years is largely due to variation in the amount of water plant growth. These costs are based on the operational staff costs and the cost of running the water plant harvester vessel.

7.3. Table 2 – Timeline of Hickling Broad dredging work and associated costs

| | Dredging & sediment re-use | |
|---------|---|-------------------|
| 2015/16 | Duck Broad and Hill Common reedbed restoration areas both filled | £168,000 |
| 2016/17 | Sediment re-used in two restored reedswamp areas | £136,080 |
| 2017/18 | Mudpumping channel in North Bay to arable land | £66,560 |
| 2018/19 | CANAPE Yr 1 – 50% Interreg funding Site prep and filling geotextile tubes | £237,280 |
| 2019/20 | CANAPE Yr 2 - 50% Interreg funding Dredging of marked channel & habitat creation | £195,750 |
| 2020/21 | CANAPE Yr 3 - 50% Interreg funding Included some R. Thurne dredging | £212,840 |
| 2021/22 | Dredging Heigham Sound to Chara Bay Report says CANAPE costs | £177,060 |
| 2022/23 | No dredging | |
| | Total | £1,193,570 |

8. Risk implications

- 8.1. Expanding water plant cutting beyond the marked navigation channel would represent a significant change in management practice and introduce a series of ecological, operational, financial, and reputational risks.
- 8.2. From an ecological perspective, submerged macrophyte beds, particularly stoneworts, play a critical role in maintaining Hickling Broad’s current clear-water, stable state. Cutting outside the channel could weaken this ecological balance by reducing sediment stability, altering nutrient cycling, and shifting community composition away from stonewort dominance. The 2017–2020 cutting trial demonstrated that even limited intervention outside the channel had measurable effects on plant height, cover, and community structure for up to two seasons. A wider-scale cutting programme would therefore carry the risk of undermining the long-term resilience of the Broad and could

trigger regulatory challenge from Natural England, given the site's statutory conservation designations (SSSI, SAC, SPA).

- 8.3. Operationally, the Authority would need to secure assent through a full Habitat Regulations Assessment process, supported by scientific evidence to demonstrate that the proposed activity would not adversely affect the integrity of the designated site. This would require early and extensive consultation with Natural England, the Environment Agency, Norfolk Wildlife Trust, and local stakeholders, with associated staff resource implications. Additional risk arises from the limited availability of safe disposal sites for cut material, which is already a constraint for channel-based management. Expanding the scale of cutting could generate volumes of plant biomass that exceed current disposal capacity, raising logistical and environmental risks.
- 8.4. Financially, expanding cutting outside the marked channel would require a step change in operational costs. Current annual costs for operating the harvester within the channel have ranged from £3,110 to £4,810 in recent years. A conservative estimate suggests that doubling or tripling the cutting area to encompass selected zones outside the channel could increase costs proportionally, resulting in annual expenditure in the region of £10,000–£15,000, depending on seasonal growth patterns. This excludes the additional cost of developing and delivering the required regulatory assessments, enhanced monitoring programmes, and potentially expanding disposal infrastructure, which could add further one-off and recurring costs.
- 8.5. Reputationally, the Authority faces risks on two fronts: stakeholder groups who favour increased open water access may perceive insufficient action if plant cutting is limited or delayed; conversely, conservation partners may challenge any intervention perceived to threaten stonewort beds and water quality. Achieving balance will require careful communication, transparent decision-making, and ongoing monitoring to demonstrate both navigational benefits and ecological safeguards.
- 8.6. In summary, cutting water plants outside of the marked channel could address some stakeholder requests and delivers some Broads Plan objectives within Hickling Broad, but carries ecological, operational, financial, and reputational risks. The cost range to deliver, operational risks, and potential mitigations are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 – Evaluation of the operational risks of delivering an expanded cutting programme

| Action | Cost for the Authority to deliver | Possible Operational Risk | Likelihood | Impact | Overall Risk | Notes / Mitigation Steps |
|---|--|---|------------|--------|--------------|--|
| Secure statutory assent through the Habitat Regulations process | Independent ecological consultant; Range - £5-15K; Certainty - Low | Delay or refusal of approval prevents work occurring | Medium | High | High | Need to provide clear evidence base for any expanded cutting proposal; |
| Identify and prepare additional safe disposal locations for large volumes of plant material | Rotation of skips over 6 weeks per year; Range - £7-9K; Certainty - Medium | Limited suitable disposal sites or options; environmental harm from disposal | Medium | High | High | Loading into and removal in skips is default option, though high cost. Some potential exists on Norfolk Wildlife Trust land that is currently under review, but depends on identifying a partner with a positive re-use for the cuttings; |
| Invest in long-term monitoring to evidence ecological outcomes | Water quality and enhanced water plant surveys annually; Range - £2-4K; Certainty - High | Insufficient data to demonstrate ecological safeguards | Medium | High | High | Set up long-term monitoring programme with partners |

| Action | Cost for the Authority to deliver | Possible Operational Risk | Likelihood | Impact | Overall Risk | Notes / Mitigation Steps |
|--|---|---|------------|--------|--------------|--|
| Operating water plant harvester across wider area | Staff and equipment time for additional 6 weeks annually Range - £14-16K Certainty - High | Limited staff capacity | Medium | Medium | Medium | Release additional staff time; Reprioritise/decrease other areas of Navigation management |
| Maintain strong stakeholder engagement to balance priorities | Additional staff time annually; Range - £300-600 Certainty - High | Conflict between stakeholders and reputational damage | Medium | Medium | Medium | Transparent communication; ongoing stakeholder engagement |

9. Conclusion

- 9.1. Following the dredging campaigns over several seasons between 2015/16 to 2021/22, a total of 40,900 m³ of sediment has been removed from the marked channel in Hickling Broad. Whilst some sediment has naturally resettled back into this slightly deeper channel, the net result has been to secure access for boats through to the village, pub and boatyard facilities.
- 9.2. Looking ahead, the future management of Hickling Broad presents a complex challenge. There are increasing calls to expand the cutting of submerged vegetation to create more open water for recreational use. While routine cutting within the marked channel continues under defined environmental thresholds, the last broad-scale vegetation management took place between 1994 and 1998, primarily targeting non-stonewort species (milfoil and pondweeds). These species declined steadily during that period and the first major collapse of the stonewort beds followed in 2000.
- 9.3. Although previous analyses have not linked cutting activity to the collapse of stonewort populations, and the 2025 Hickling Review attributes the decline primarily to grazing pressure, the evidence presented reinforces the ecological importance of dense and widespread stonewort beds in maintaining Hickling Broad's clear-water state. Experimental cutting trials have shown that even limited intervention can alter plant structure and community composition for multiple seasons, with potential implications for sediment stability and nutrient cycling. The potential for stonewort beds to naturally contract also exists.
- 9.4. Some stakeholders have asked for more plant cutting outside the marked channel to help with race sailing. The Authority's responsibility is to manage boat access whilst protecting important underwater plants like stonewort. Any increase in cutting and associated additional costs must be carefully considered, as underwater plants play a key role in keeping the water clean, supporting wildlife, and maintaining the Broad's long-term health. The views of the Navigation Committee are sought on the future management of the broad.

Author: Dan Hoare

Date of report: 20 August 2025

Background papers:

Hickling Broad Enhancement Project Proposal, Navigation Committee, 3 September 2015 – copy available on request from [Contact-form](#)

[Water plant management](#) - Navigation Committee, 8 June 2023

[Experimental cutting of stonewort in Hickling Broad 2017-2019](#) - Navigation Committee, 8 June 2023

[Hickling Broad – Lake Review - 1980-2024](#)

[Broads Plan](#) strategic objectives: **B1** - Restore, maintain and enhance lakes and use monitoring evidence to trial and implement further innovative lake restoration techniques; **C1** - Maintain navigation water depths to defined specifications, reduce sediment input and dispose of dredged material in sustainable and beneficial ways; **C2** - Maintain existing navigation water space and develop appropriate opportunities to extend access for various types of craft; **C3** - Manage water plants and riverside trees and scrub, and seek resources to increase operational targets; **E1** - Improve the integrated network of access routes and points (with easier access for people with mobility and sensory needs), linked to visitor facilities

Navigation Committee

04 September 2025

Agenda item number 12

Boat Safety Scheme - compliance

Report by Chief Executive and Head of IT and Collector of Tolls

Purpose

To consult the Committee on a potential amendment to the Authority's byelaws using the power in Section 11 of the Broads Authority Act 2009 to support compliance with the Boat Safety Scheme.

Broads Plan context

Broads Plan objective **C4** - Maintain and improve safety and security standards and user behaviour on the waterways.

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1. Background

- 1.1. One of the main ambitions behind the 2009 Broads Authority Act (2009 Act) was the full adoption of the Boat Safety Scheme. As a stop gap measure and in advance of the passing of the 2009 Act, the 2006 Boat Safety Standard Byelaws passed under s10(3) of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 (1988 Act) contained a 23-page listing of standards for privately owned and hire vessels. They covered fuel and engine systems, electrical systems, fire extinguishment and escape, LPG systems, appliances and flues etc.

1.2. Under s10(3) and Schedule 5 of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 (1988 Act) the Broads Authority has the power to make byelaws for the good management of the navigation area, the conservation of its natural beauty and amenities and the promotion of its use for purposes of recreation. This includes at schedule 5(4) making byelaws to prescribe for the purposes of safety, conditions with respect of the construction, equipment and maintenance of vessels using the navigation area. The Byelaws may contain such incidental, consequential, and supplemental provisions as the Authority thinks fit.

1.3. Section 11 (2) of the 2009 Act states:

(2) The Authority may make byelaws for the purpose of providing for the registration of vessels in the navigation area or on adjacent waters, and for the determination and recovery of tolls in respect of vessels moored, used or navigated in the navigation area or on adjacent waters.

2. 2006 Boat Safety Standard Byelaws

2.1. There were three different commencement dates for the byelaws, 1 April 2007, 1 April 2008 and 1 April 2009 for different classes of vessel.

2.2. Byelaw (4) required that:

The owner or master of a vessel shall only moor, use or navigate, or cause or permit a vessel to be moored, used or navigated in the navigation area if

(a) it complies with the boat safety standards applicable to the vessel (subject to provision of Byelaw (6 (4) or

(b) there is a current certificate of conformity.

2.3. Byelaw 6 (1) required:

A person applying to the Authority for a toll receipt for a vessel shall, if so required by the Authority, submit with the application such evidence as the Authority may reasonably require to demonstrate that at the date of application the vessel complies in every aspect with the boat standards which are applicable to the vessel or which will be applicable to the vessel for all or part of the period covered by the toll receipt.

2.4. Byelaw 7 stated that:

Within 28 days of receiving evidence under Byelaw 6 the Authority shall-

(a) if it is satisfied that the vessel complies with the boat standards, issue a certificate of conformity, or

(b) if it is not so satisfied, issue a notice of refusal -

And shall forward the certificate of conformity or the notice or refusal to the person applying for the toll receipt.

2.5. Byelaw 15 (1) stated:

Any owner or master of a vessel who without reasonable excuse contravenes or fails to comply any requirement made by or under any of these Byelaws shall be guilty of an offence and be liable on summary conviction to a fine no exceeding level 4 on the standard scale.

3. Broads Authority Act 2009

- 3.1. The Broads Authority Act aligned the construction and equipment standards for the Broads with the National Boat Safety Scheme (Section 12 of the Act) and a Boat Safety Certificate is evidence of compliance with the construction and equipment standards.
- 3.2. Section 15 of the Act deals with “Offences as to standards and insurance requirements” and under that section it is an offence not to comply with any safety standards applicable to the vessel as below.

(1) The owner or master of a vessel who without reasonable excuse and (in the case of a master of a vessel who is not also the owner) knowingly—

(a) keeps, lets for hire or uses a vessel in the navigation area or on adjacent waters which does not comply with any standards applicable to the vessel; or

(b) contravenes the requirements of section 14(2) as to insurance policies, shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 4 on the standard scale

- 3.3. The 2009 Act contains a series of provisions to deal with unsafe vessels including Section 18 which defines the ‘Meaning of an unsafe vessel’, and Section 19 ‘Powers as to unsafe vessels’ and Section 20 ‘Removal of unsafe vessels’.
- 3.4. To ascertain if a vessel is unsafe the Authority must be satisfied (section 18), after taking advice where appropriate from a person qualified to examine or assess compliance, that non-compliance with any standards imposed under s12 continues or continue to give rise to a danger to any person or to any property, or risk of pollution, from the vessel. The Authority has a power of access to a vessel to inspect it (Section 17 Entry on and inspection of vessels) and in practice would usually need to access the vessel in order to ascertain if a vessel was unsafe. Section 17 (9) and (10) state that:

(9) Subject to subsection (10) the costs incurred by the Authority under this section shall be borne by the Authority.

(10) In any case in which the Authority exercises the powers of this section in relation to a vessel which it determines fails materially to comply with any

standards applicable to the vessel, the costs reasonably incurred by the Authority in exercising those powers shall be borne by the owner of the vessel.

3.5. The costs are therefore borne by the Authority unless the vessel materially fails to comply with the relevant standards.

3.6. Section 11 (10) of the 2009 Act states that:

(10) Where the Authority is satisfied that a vessel does not comply with any requirement of the relevant sections, it may cancel the registration of that vessel if—

(a) it has given the owner written notice of the non-compliance in question and required him to remedy it within 14 days of the date on which the notice is given; and

(b) that period has expired without the non-compliance being remedied;

but where the Authority considers that it is necessary to cancel the registration as a matter of urgency, it may do so with effect from the date on which the notice is given

3.7. Where a vessel doesn't comply with the Boat Safety Standards the Authority can therefore cancel registration. However, for the Authority to be satisfied that there is non-compliance.

3.8. While the Act appeared to cover all eventualities this whole process can be time consuming and costly. With the benefit of recent experience, it is now clear that it would be simpler for the Authority's Byelaws, amended under the provision in Section 11 of the Broads Authority Act 2009, to require a current Boat Safety Certificate to be held in respect of vessels, other than seagoing freight vessels, as a condition of using the navigation area and adjacent waters for the purposes of safety. A failure to hold a current Boat Safety Certificate would be an offence under the Authority's Byelaws. It is therefore proposed to reinstate wording like that used in the 2006 Boat Safety Standard Byelaws in the Registration Byelaws, namely:

The owner or master of a vessel shall only moor, use or navigate, or cause or permit a vessel to be moored, used or navigated in the navigation area and adjacent waters if a Boat Safety Scheme Certification has been issued in respect of the vessel and such Boat Safety Scheme Certification is Valid.

"Boat Safety Scheme Certification" means a certificate issued to vessels that comply with the Safety Standards imposed by and in accordance with a Boat Safety Scheme.

"Boat Safety Scheme" means a scheme currently in force in relation to vessels on navigable waters under the control of the Canal and River Trust and the Environment Agency.

“Safety Standards” are the standards and relating to construction and equipment for the purposes of ensuring safety or preventing noise or pollution imposed in accordance with s12 of the Broads Act 2009.

“Valid” a Boat Safety Scheme Certification is valid where it has been issued in accordance with the Boat Safety Scheme in respect of the relevant vessel, and the period for which the certificate has been issued has not expired.

4. Process

- 4.1. The process of making a byelaw requires that the Authority consult the Navigation Committee, the purpose of this report.
- 4.2. The procedure for making byelaws under either Section 10 (3) of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 and Section 11 of the Broads Authority Act 2009 is pursuant to Section 236 of the Local Government Act 1972 and is set out below:
 1. Establish what legislation should be used to make the byelaw.
 2. Draft the byelaw.
 3. Submit the draft byelaw and application for Provisional Approval of byelaws to the government byelaws section (byelaws@communities.gov.uk). At this stage, the Government will scrutinise the byelaw and provided there is no legal problem or conflict with government policy, notify the Authority that it can make and seal the byelaw.
 4. Once the Authority has formally resolved to adopt the byelaw, make the byelaw under the common seal of the Authority.
 5. Advertising the byelaw – a notice of intention to apply for the confirmation of the byelaw must be published in one or more local newspapers at least one month before the application for confirmation of the byelaws is made. A copy of the byelaw must also be kept for at least one month before the application for confirmation is made at the Authority’s offices for public inspection. A copy of the byelaw must be provided to any member of the public who applies for one (on payment for a sum not exceeding 10p for every 100 words as the Authority shall determine).
 6. Once the above steps have been followed the Authority should apply to the Government for confirmation.
 7. It is open to the Secretary of State (so) to confirm byelaws subject to such modifications as he thinks fit. If the SoS considers the modifications to be substantial, he is required to inform the Authority and require it to take such steps as the SoS considers necessary for informing persons likely to be concerned with the modification. In that case the SoS shall not confirm the byelaws until such period has elapsed as the SS thinks reasonable for the Authority, and others who have been informed of his proposal, to consider and comment on it.

8. Once confirmed the Authority must print and deposit the Byelaws at its offices and they shall at all reasonable hours be open to public inspection without payment, and a copy is to be provided to any person on payment of such sum, not exceeding 20p for every copy, as the Authority may determine.

4.3. It is noted that the Secretary of State is entitled under to hold a local enquiry before deciding whether or not to confirm byelaws made under s10(3) 88 Act. Where that is the case the minister may direct that the costs incurred by him in relation to the inquiry shall be paid by such local authority or party to the inquiry as he may direct.

4.4. The Minister may also make orders as to the costs of the parties at the inquiry and who those costs are to be paid by.

5. Financial implications

5.1. There are costs associated with amending the byelaws, for example in advertising the proposed byelaw and making it available to the public, but the main costs are in staff time.

6. Risk implications

6.1. If the proposed byelaw is opposed the main risk is in the amount of time and resource that it takes to get it confirmed.

7. Conclusion

7.1. An amendment to the Authority's Byelaws to make it an offence not to have a Boat Safety Certificate applicable to the vessel would make the enforcement of the standards simpler.

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Background papers: Broads Authority Act 2009, Boat Safety Byelaws 2006

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