

# Broads Local Access Forum

## Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2025

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## Present

Keith Bacon – in the Chair, Richard Atkins, Harry Blathwayt, Christine Cane, Peter Dixon, Geoff Doggett, Edward Gilder, Tim Harris, Pat Holtom, David Lilley, Peter Mason, Katie Phillips, Christopher Yardley.

## In attendance

Hannah Davison – Natural England, Dan Hoare – Head of Operations, Kylie Moos – Administrative Officer, Tobi Radcliffe – Waterways and Recreation Officer.

## 1. Appointment of Chair

Keith Bacon was proposed by Christopher Yardley and seconded by Harry Blathwayt.

**There being no other nominations Keith Bacon was appointed Chair of the Broads Local Access Forum for the forthcoming year 2025/26.**

## 2. Appointment of Vice Chair

David Lilley was proposed by Christopher Yardley and seconded by Edward Gilder.

**There being no other nominations David Lilley was appointed Vice Chair of the Broads Local Access Forum for the forthcoming year 2025/26.**

## 3. Apologies for absence and welcome

**Apologies** received from Tony Gibbons.

## 4. Declarations of interest

Members indicated they had no further declarations of interest other than those already registered and set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

## 5. Minutes of the Broads Local Access Forum meeting held on 4 June 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2025 were approved as a correct record and agreed by the Chair.

## 6. Summary of actions and outstanding issues following decisions at previous meetings

A Forum member asked why Caroline Bidwell, Team Leader of the Green Infrastructure team is not attending. Dan Hoare responded, Caroline Bidwell was planning to attend today but they had a meeting clash and was unable to attend. They have sent their apologies and plan to attend at the next meeting in May 2026.

## Lost Paths

Richard Atkins reported that they responded to the request to submit evidence to the All Party Parliamentary Group for outdoor recreation and access to nature in July. The response was submitted as an individual, but the Broads Local Access Forum were listed as their organisation. The response highlighted the issues of inland paths that follow the rivers and asked the group to consider extending the right of deviation that exists on coastal paths to paths that follow inland waterways.

## 7. Active Travel England update

Tobi Radcliffe joined the meeting as the new Waterways and Recreation Officer and introduced the Active Travel England (ATE) report. They previously worked as a Ranger for the Authority and have over 20 years of experience working in the Broads and started the role last week.

Phase One of ATE completed in June 2025 with the publication of the of the Broads Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), titled 'Broads Cycling, Wheeling and Walking Plan'. As part of the plan, proposed infrastructure and travel route improvements were identified with associated timescales and priorities. ATE have confirmed that all 10 of the English National Parks will receive funding for Phase Two in 2026/2027. Phase Two funding requires at least one proposed project to undertake a feasibility study that is developed to the stage where it can be delivered once funding becomes available. Project ideas need to be submitted to ATE for assessment by 12 January 2026. The funding will also enable the Authority to add capacity to the team for during Phase Two.

The 'wheeling' part of the title refers to all forms of mobility which helps people to get around, for example a powered wheelchair or pushchair. Similarly, Sustrans have recently changed their name to the Walk Wheel Cycle Trust.

A Forum member commented that they were disappointed to see that there was not any site specific priorities with an immediate priority, instead they are all in the medium and long-term ranging from three to five years. They would like to see some delivery taking place sooner, for example the Postwick to Acle cycle route would only require sign posting. Tobi Radcliffe responded, this is the type of feedback that they are looking for from BLAF members to help prioritise and understand which routes are suitable to take forward to the feasibility stage. It is also possible to take forward a project with other sources of external funding as and when they come available.

Edward Gilder offered to share their knowledge of cycling routes in the Broads and talk about the practicalities of delivering some of the routes set out in Annex A of the LCWIP with Tobi Radcliffe.

It is not the intention that all of the recommendations set out in Annex A will be upgraded to a cycle route. The change would require a legal process with the respective County Council.

Regarding TH3, Repps Staithe to Thurne Village, a Forum member commented that the route is an existing pedestrian Public Right of Way and is part of the Weavers' Way, they asked if the

recommendation is to upgrade to allow cycling, or for the route to maintain it's existing status. Tobi Radcliffe responded, the suggestion is for repair and maintenance.

A Forum member commented that TH1 refers to How Hill, but it has not been included on the map. They added that the Forum and the Broads Authority have previously spent a lot of time on the route from Ludham Bridge to St Benet's Abbey and questioned if that should be included in the recommendation. A Forum member commented that the section of path that leads up to the riverbank is muddy most of the time and it could not be upgraded for wheelchair or cycle use without major investment. Another Forum member added that whilst it is not suitable, they have seen cyclists use the footpath from Ludham Bridge to St Benet's Abbey.

The route UB2, Hoveton Viaduct to Wroxham Bridge improvement links in to the ATE and government aims of encouraging more people to commute and move around without cars. For the Broads this also includes ways in which visitors can explore the area without a car.

A Forum member commented that that there is a quiet lane option between Pilson Green and Upton for the route UB1, Wroxham to Acle, but the map indicates that the route goes along a main road which could be avoided.

Hannah Davison commented that it would be good to prioritise access between Stalham Staithe and the town, particularly as an area of higher deprivation. Currently you need to cross a busy main road. A Forum member commented that they would welcome any suggestions on the crossing, North Norfolk District Council have been looking at ways to improve the crossing and met just this week to discuss the issue, but there are a number of difficulties.

Regarding UB5, Horning to Ludham Bridge, the Three Rivers route runs from Hoveton to Horning and the next phase was to run from Horning to Luham Bridge and then onto Ludham. A Forum member noted that a number of routes were explored in the area when the scheme was first developed several years ago. Another member commented that it is possible to get from Ludham to the bridge at Johnson Street almost entirely on a traffic free track.

The WA4 route proposed at Haddiscoe includes the disused railway line which in places has long disappeared. A Forum member commented that the biggest issue in that areas is the Haddiscoe bends which contain a number of blind spots for both walkers and cyclists. A Forum member commented that the British Horse Society had asked if a route would be possible across the old railway line from Haddiscoe to St Olaves and requested that they meet with Tobi Radcliffe to discuss this further. A Forum member suggested signage at Haddiscoe bends to advise horse riders of the dangers of the road. Another Forum member added, the reduced speed limit on the stretch of road has helped, but it is dangerous for anything other than a car, this includes pedestrians, cyclists, and horse riders. A Forum member asked if there is already a bridleway in place that runs from Thorpe Hall to the bridge which would avoid Haddiscoe Dam Road. Dan Hoare commented that Haddiscoe FP2 and Thurlton FP6 connect Thorpe and Thurton towards Haddiscoe, but users will still need to cross St Olaves

bridge as shown on the interactive [Norfolk Highways and Public Rights of Way](#) map. There are no existing rights of way on the disused railway track.

The route YA6, Surlingham to Postwick is noted as a feasibility study for a new foot/cycle ferry crossing over the River Yare.

The route YA1, Whitlingham to Broadland Business Park includes a cycle crossing at the Postwick flyover on the A47, currently it is a pavement on the side of an A road with no segregation from the traffic. A Forum member commented that the current options is dangerous, and they have stopped using this route when cycling as a group.

A Forum member commented that there is already a permissive path in place from Loddon Village to Pyes Mill which is similar to YA5. The recommendation is for signage and interpretation.

Hannah Davison asked if there has been any coordination with Whitlingham Country Park regarding the route YA1. Last year they carried out a large public consultation asking visitors for their feedback on accessing the Country Park. It is well known that most visitors access Whitlingham by car so anything that moves away from this would be welcomed. The NatureCityNorwich bid was also successful and there could be more opportunities to collaborate in the area.

Regarding YA2, Broadland Business Park to Brundall, a Forum member commented that the route is well signposted, but users need to navigate the shared path over the A47. There is also an alternative option via Low Road in Postwick.

A Forum member noted that YA3, Brundall to Acle would need to get across the Cantley Road, which in the autumn and winter is very busy with sugar beet lorries. They suggested that cyclists cross at Beighton.

A Forum member asked if the YA3, Brundall to Acle will be affected by the duelling of the A47 which may be finished next year. Another Forum member responded, the duelling will make it easier for cyclists to cross the A47 because there will be a shared use path at the White House junction making it easier to travel to South Walsham and into the Broads.

## 8. Any other business

Dan Hoare provided an update on the progress of the Wherryman's Way. The active project is the upgrading on Bramerton FP5 which runs from Bramerton Common up to Surlingham FP3 and the section that has been eroded away by the river. The plan is to install a rock mattress as part of the erosion protection, and this is a live application on the Authority's planning system which will be presented to the planning committee on 5 December. The biggest challenge at the moment is the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) test that is required for applications where the river edge will be modified. The BNG test is aimed at large developments rather than surfacing a footpath in a rural environment, as a result the BNG weighting had unproportionally calculated that £400,000 worth of offsite mitigation is required which is not feasible. The BNG officer for the project has submitted the application

under 'Rule 4' which allows for schemes to happen where the metric does not work for the project because the County Council are trying to follow a statutory function to maintain access.

A Forum commented that the Broads is the only National Park that does not have a Youth Hostel and asked if there are any connections to the Youth Hostel Association. A Youth Hostel would aid walkers, cyclists, paddleboarders and any other users to stay cheaply in the area.

A Forum member requested that BLAF members report any sightings of floating pennywort when they are out in the Broads. Currently there is an outbreak in the Waveney as well as the upper Ant. The Broads Internal Drainage Board (IDB) recently reported floating pennywort at Burgh Castle, but it is not clear if it was over the flood bank, part of the drainage system. Another Forum member commented that floating pennywort has been on the Waveney for a long time and the Norfolk Invasive Species Group already have an action plan in place. Norfolk County Councils invasive species officer has been vacant since August, and the role includes coordination between various agencies which is currently missing. Whilst the pennywort weevil is an option to deal with floating pennywort, it is often used as a last resort and it expensive at £20,000 per dose.

A Forum member asked for more information on the barriers that have been put up on the River Chet by Pyes Mill, they added that there is a delegation of people who often fish in the area and are now unable to, but there has not been a lot of communication as to why parts of the moorings are closed. The closures also have an economic impact with less people being able to moor their boats and visit nearby shops and eateries. Dan Hoare responded, South Norfolk Council own the site and the Broads Authority manage it on their behalf. The piling which has been taped off is unsafe to moor and fish from. Because the area is managed as a 24-hour mooring, anglers would also need to give way to boats coming into moor. The Authority are an impasse with the South Norfolk Council who do not have the money to invest in repiling the edges to make it safe for users, so the Authority is currently managing a poor condition asset.

Regarding the bird hide on the Wherryman's Way, a Forum member asked for an update on the footpath which leads to the bird hide. Dan Hoare replied, the bird hide is currently dilapidated and in need of repair. The footpath along the river edge and bank maintenance is a challenge in those areas, but the decision lies with the County Council. It is hoped that an update will be provided when Caroline Bidwell of Norfolk Council attends a future Forum meeting.

A Forum member commented that they were disappointed to see BLAF meeting reduce from four to two per year and questioned if it was a cost cutting measure or if it because of the criticism which the Forum provides. The Chair confirmed that the reduction in meetings was a financial decision. Harry Blathwayt, member of BLAF and Chair of the Broad Authority added, the decision is purely financial. The Authority received a cut of 8.2% to the revenue budget and that has affected staffing across the board. Discussions that are had in their meeting welcome, including the criticism which is valid and constructive. Dan Hoare agreed that the feedback is needed as demonstrated during today's meetings. To make best use of the

reduced meetings it is helpful for members to take the time and read the papers ahead of the meetings. Where specific topics require more discussions, it may be that a subgroup is formed outside of the meetings with Tobi Radcliffe.

Kylie Moos will be changing roles at the Authority next month, and Forum members are reminded to continue to use the [BLAF@broads-authority.gov.uk](mailto:BLAF@broads-authority.gov.uk) email address for any future correspondence.

The Chair commented on the good turn out to today's meeting and encouraged members of the Forum to consider future agenda items or site visits in advance of the next meeting. They suggested an update from Norfolk Wildlife Trust and their vision for Hickling, and access in the reserve. The reserve could also serve as a future site visit for the Forum.

## 9. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Broads Local Access Forum would be held on Wednesday 20 May 2026.

The meeting ended at 11.25am.

Signed by

Chair

