

Broadland Futures Initiative

Minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2023

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Attendees

Marie-Pierre Tighe (Chair)- Broads Authority, Peter Doktor- Environment Agency, Victoria Egan- National Trust, Catherine Harris- Environment Agency, Nathan Harris- South Norfolk and Broadland District Council, Kevin Hart- Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Duncan Holmes- Broads Angling Services Group, Mark Johnson- Environment Agency, Charles Krolik-Root- Coastal Partnership East, Sarah Luff- Norfolk County Council, Philip Pearson- RSPB, Gavin Rumsey- Environment Agency, Kylie Moos - Broads Authority (minutes).

1. Apologies for absence and welcome

Marie-Pierre Tighe (MPT) welcomed everyone to the remote meeting.

Apologies received from Donna Dean, John Jones, Charlotte Rivett and Rob Wise.

2. BASG Salinity monitoring project

Duncan Holmes (DH) from the Broads Angling Services Group (BASG) was in attendance to present on the Broads freshwater environment and the recent saline incursions. BASG are a Community Interest Company (CIC) involved with the planning, management, and development of angling across the Broads. The [Broads Angling Strategy](#) was first published over 20 years ago and was adopted by both the Environment Agency (EA) and the Broads Authority (BA). The Strategy is updated every four years and is used today to form the blueprint for the work that BASG does for angling across the Broads.

In September 2022 lethal levels of saline were recorded in the Broads, effecting 53km of Broads Rivers and Broads. BASG shared a map on social media on 21 September showing how far the lethal levels had travelled up the system, which attracted attention from the public and press. BASG have a meeting planned with the fisheries management.

Several people said that more data and modelling is required on salinity in the Broads, and BASG have started an analysis of the existing Broads hydrology data. Existing water and salinity loggers have shown that salinity enters the system at two locations; aquifer incursions at the headwaters of the Thurne and tidal ingress at the mouth of the River Yare. Saline incursions at the Thurne headwaters can be high, but not an immediate threat to freshwater.

Salinity measures for the previous five years have shown lethal levels of salinity at Acle for 86 days vs 10 days at Cantley. The 500ha at Breydon Water appears to be acting as a buffer for saline intrusion in the Southern Broads. A proposal to protect the northern Broads from lethal levels of saline incursions may be to introduce a 250ha flood plain north of the A47.

The current data indicates that more detailed analysis could shape potential adaptation. BASG is aware that Broadland Futures Initiative (BFI) is focusing on flood risk but welcomes any suggestions of how to progress the model.

Comments and answers to questions

Peter Doktor (PD) asked if BASG have investigated fluvial input as saline intrusion is the result of a balance of tidal and fluvial elements. DH responded, BASG have not been able to investigate this as the group does not have the skillsets required.

The 250ha site has been modelled on the 20-25 year forecast, accounting for climate change and sea level rise. The modelling also assumes that the site relies on natural mechanisms and pumps to manage the water levels.

A lot of the data analysis has been over the past 5-6 years. Mark Johnson (MJ) has seen several saline events in the last 40 years and suggested that the analysis provides a more distant history. MJ advised that the EA will hold the additional data. DH agreed that there have been saline intrusion events in the past, and highlighted that the September 2022 event saw a lot of year 0-1 fish lost which will have an impact to other species in the Broads. DH agreed to build in the historical context to future presentations.

DH has noted that sometimes the public perception of the BFI is that that the BFI is the solution to all issues related to flooding in the next 100 years. BASG have been educating people on what would be possible under the scope of BFI.

Philip Pearson (PP) reported that the RSPB have picked up salinity increases in the Catfield Fen and Sutton Fen area and want to move towards habitat creation. The Broadland Flood Alleviation Project has previously mentioned washlands but they never materialised. A site north of the A47 would be another opportunity for people to see the Broads. PP asked if there has been any thoughts on the mechanisms that might be required to make the change. DH responded, landowners need to be compensated to deliver these changes. Currently a lot of valuable and protected land gets damaged by saline incursion and there isn't the option to carry as normal.

To date, BFI have taken forward the analysis of the data that is currently available. A technical report was published last year and BFI spoke to various organisations and looked at what the best tools are in relation to sea level rise. The best tool was to take a statistical approach, to look at tide levels, fluvial levels and to use all the data identified to model a relationship enabling to make predictions. PD asked if BASG work presented today has been written up, DH agreed to provide a summary to PD.

3. Update of technical work

Jacobs work on the hydraulic modelling updating and development of new models has continued, but the completion date of Apr 2024 is likely to be delayed until June 2024.

There has been a delay in being able to instruct Jacobs to start on the next phase of technical work, but this has not started.

Product 21- Longlist of possible management actions

- Identify and group existing and possible future actions for managing flood risk.
- Based on local, national and international experience, and possible previous ideas.

- Structural and non-structural actions, operating at different geographical scales.
- Resilience to flooding with respect place making, protection, responding and recovery.
- Possible wider benefits.

Dates

- Mid-April send to IPT review draft public consultation document.
- Late May public consultation starts (online, one month duration) to review draft longlist and seek possible additions.
- Early September IPT review technical report.
- Mid October IPT review public facing report.

Jacobs has made the initial attempt to identify, group and characterise possible management actions and requested that any feedback from the IPT is provided in the next two weeks.

Comments

The BA are currently reviewing the Local Plan and anticipate submission by the end of 2024. MPT asked if any of the planning policy actions and Local Plan could coincide. PD agreed to consider this as there could be some coevolution in the next stages.

Great Yarmouth New Local Plan is currently out for consultation. The consultation closes on the 27 February 2023 and can be found at the following link [Great Yarmouth New Local Plan \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com). Sarah Luff (SL) noticed that there are lots of open-ended questions around flood risk and what needs to be developed. Charles Krolik-Root (CKR) suggested considering the £20million Levelling Up grant which has been awarded to the North Quay area in Great Yarmouth, some of the items in the table for Product 21 could be tied into this.

MJ suggested that another column is added to the table to include potential wider community benefits.

Following on from comments made in today's meeting regarding the public perception of BFI, Kevin Hart (KH) asked if there is an understanding for how BFI relates to salinity in the table. PD will consider this question.

KH mentioned that Product 25g- WFD/WER assessment will be impacted by the retained EU law bill.

PP suggested including environmental benefits in the table and reminded the IPT of the importance of the coastal margins.

Product 22 finalised SMART objectives/indicators

- At least one indicator to show compliance with each objective.
- For use in initial screening of potential actions and subsequent detailed appraisal.

Dates

- Mid Apr IPT workshop to inform the recommended set of indicators.
- Early June IPT review technical report.
- Early July EMF to approve the set of indicators.
- Late August IPT review public facing report.

4. Update on communications and community engagement

GR provided an update to the IPT on activities since the last meeting.

- The 11th edition of the BFI Newsletter has recently been published. Features focus on modelling update, general progress as well as summary of recent engagement activity.
- Recently presented at Stalham Farmers club to members and also to NFU East Norfolk branch members. Farmers requested that sustainability was measured and that food security is higher up on the agenda.
- Meeting held with Norfolk County Council Public Health Department regarding social capital and the work BFI is undertaking on this as part of its appraisal process.

Food security was discussed at length at Stalham Farmers Club. The conversations highlighted how the world has changed in the short time since the objectives were set and that the priorities will keep changing over the next 100 years.

Key points in the near future

- BFI will return to the Upper Thurne Working Group in March to share findings of the workshop held in November 2022. The report will be shared with IPT members and EMF.
- Confirmed via RFCC Engagement Sub Committee that BFI will be attending the Norfolk Show this year.
- Meeting due with on 22 February with Sharon Bleese and CKR to establish where efficiencies can be achieved between BFI and FCRIP, so we can benefit one another in engaging Gt Yarmouth communities/groups with regards to their flood resilience.
- Planning back underway for engagement activity for long listing of potential flood risk management options

5. Elected Members Forum

The 18 January EMF meeting had been cancelled. The next meeting will take place on 4 April at 2pm. The meeting will include an update on flood risk management long listing. MJ noted that the meeting will take place during the pre-election period however it will not impact the meeting as it is classed as ordinary planned activity.

6. AOB

None

7. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Broadland Future Initiative is 19 April 2023 at Yare House.

Summary of progress

Outstanding actions	Meeting date	Assigned to