



Broads Curriculum

Geography Key Stage 2

What's it like to live in the Broads National Park?

Table of Contents

Work.....	2
Home life.....	2
Recent changes for residents.....	3
Facts and figures	3

This resource provides some ideas for:

- locational knowledge (looking at land use patterns and change over time)
- human geography (types of settlement and land use, and economic activity, including trade links)

Work

What work did Broads residents do in the past? Go back into history and the thriving Broads economy was based on the wealth of its natural resources and the quality of its environment. Marshmen between the 1500s and 1800s dug peat for fuel, cut reed and sedge for thatch, cut marsh hay for cattle feed, cut marsh litter (mixed marsh plants) for animal bedding and hunted for fish, eels and wildfowl. Historically, many thousands of people also worked in agriculture.

In the second half of the 20th century the environment suffered and drastic changes occurred in the Broads. Water quality decreased and areas of habitat such as fen and grazing marsh were lost. Changes to habitats meant changes in the natural populations of plants and animals, which in the past were exploited as a source of income. This, coupled with other social changes, meant that people had to look elsewhere for employment opportunities.

There are still some people involved in marsh work, reed cutters and thatchers, but new occupations have mostly taken over, and though agriculture is still one of the main industries in the Broads, due to the mechanisation of farming far fewer people are employed in it today.

Tourism is the other main industry in the Broads now – and it employs a lot of people.

The huge numbers of visitors to the Broads require a range of facilities, many of which provide local employment, local income and opportunities for setting up local businesses. People work in boatyards, shops, pubs, cafes, restaurants, recreation facilities, visitor centres and other places to visit, and hotels and other holiday accommodation. People also work in conservation-related jobs.

Home life

Living in the Broads gives many residents an opportunity to enjoy the recreational activities that the area provides – it's not all work. Residents may have easy access to walking, fishing, sailing and other boating activities.

However, access for many may be limited by time and monetary constraints. Many children living in the Broads, despite living near the water, have never been on a boat. Some people living in towns and cities close to the Broads are unaware of its special qualities and may not have had the opportunity to visit.

Living in the Broads can also bring challenges. The number of people in the Broads in the summer is many more times that in winter. Residents sometimes feel that the number of visitors in some areas over the summer months is intrusive.

Increased numbers of people may mean more litter, which not only causes a visual impact but can also harm animals that swallow or become trapped in it.

Traffic congestion also becomes a problem at busy times, sometimes meaning that residents have a longer journey time for everyday activities like going to work or going shopping. High volumes of traffic can also pose problems in terms of danger to pedestrians, the visual impact of a lot of vehicles, noise and air pollution. Parking is also more difficult at peak times.

Riverside homes become less peaceful in summer and diesel-powered boats can cause noise pollution, which spoils the calm atmosphere of the Broads.

Recent changes for residents

It's not all about problems! Water quality has improved, thanks to the work of many organisations and individuals involved in conservation and care for the environment, including water companies, farmers and boating businesses. Areas of habitat almost lost have been regained and wildlife has come back.

Walking to enjoy the Broads environment doesn't cost much and there are more walking routes, including more easy access routes, and promotion of walks and walking events. Many more organisations are providing relatively low-cost activities for children and families.

With more facilities for increasing numbers of visitors, there are more facilities for residents. These facilities can provide more and different employment.

Recent changes in the national planning system mean that residents have more opportunities to be involved in plans and decisions about what happens in their own area through neighbourhood plans.

Visitors want to come to the Broads National Park because it's a lovely place – and everyone has an interest in keeping it that way whether visitor or resident.

Facts and figures

Visit the Broads Authority website and navigate to the [facts and figures](#) page for more useful information.