

Broads Authority
Broads Local Access Forum

Minutes of the meeting held on 05 September 2018

Present:

Dr Keith Bacon (Chairman)

Mr Kelvin Allen	Dr Peter Mason
Miss Liz Brooks	Mr Stephen Read
Mr Mike Flett	Mr George Saunders
Mr Alec Hartley	Mr Charles Swan
Mr Tony Gibbons	Mrs Melanie Vigo di Gallidoro

In Attendance

Ms Lottie Carlton – Administrative Officer
Mr Mark King - Waterways and Recreation Officer (WRO)

1/1 To receive apologies for absence and welcome new members

Mr Louis Baugh, Mr Adrian Clarke, Mrs Dawn Hatton, Mr Ray Walpole and Mr Chris Yardley sent their apologies.

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting.

1/2 To receive declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1/3 To receive and confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 06 June 2018

The Forum agreed to amend 'Broads Angling Strategy Group' to 'Broads Angling Services Group' throughout. The Forum approved the minutes with these amendments.

1/4 To receive any points of information arising from the minutes

(1) Minute 4/4 (1) How Hill Footpath

Paul Mitchelmore, Environment Agency, agreed that the Broads Authority (BA) could take over control of the bridge. The footpath is overgrown and will need cutting. Once checks on the bridge and cutting have taken place, the Authority will open the footpath to the public.

(2) Minute 4/4 (2) River Wensum Strategy

All partners agreed to adoption of the River Wensum Strategy. An official launch will take place in November (all stakeholders are invited).

The following projects have started: Biodiversity survey, New Mills project (planning permission to be submitted and tender out), Floating vegetation platforms and work on disabled access to the Riverside Walk.

(3) Minute 4/4 (4) Martham – Footpath 1 – Modification Order Public Hearing

The Chairman agreed to contact Norfolk County Council to get an update. A Forum member advised that a four bar gate is now on the site.

(4) Minute 4/4 (5) Staithe and the Environment Agency

The Chairman agreed to contact the Environment Agency to invite them to a BLAF meeting.

The Staithe Report is nearly ready for online publication, including maps/illustrations/photos. Issues surrounding Thorpe River Green caused the publication delays.

(5) Minute 4/5 Norfolk County Council update (River Chet/Wherryman's Way)

The Parish Council is still in talks with the landowner.

The hydrology study took place (awaiting the report).

(6) Minutes 4/8 Broads Forum updates

Broads Engage workshops will replace Broads Forum meetings. The first workshop on 'Access' is at Acle Recreation Centre on 6th November at 1.30pm. BLAF members are welcome to attend.

(7) AOB Ludham footpath signage

The Ludham footpath signs are on order.

1/5 Broads Integrated Access Strategy Review

The WRO gave a presentation 'Review of the Broads Integrated Access Strategy' giving key outcomes and actions. Forum members provided additions and feedback.

(1) Drivers and principles

Drivers for the strategy include health and wellbeing, social inclusion, engaging with less advantaged communities, tackling obesity, active recreation and access for all.

Principles guiding the strategy include landscape and environmental impact, climate change adaptation, partnership working, multiple benefits and sustainability.

Suggested additions and answers to questions:

- Identify and link access activities to bus and train routes.
- More could be made of low-key, reversible parking options near footpath hubs, for example Boundary Farm, Oby near the Weavers Way or BESL flood defence hardstanding areas used for machinery. Publicity and planning issues might make this difficult.
- Maintain current facilities, for example Rollesby fishing platforms.
- Focus on lost areas, for example Cockshoot footpath.
- Tackle decisions made by taxi companies who are stopping wheelchair accessible vehicles. They claim the Equality Act prevents them charging more for this service. The Government is challenging such decisions.

(2) Strategic objectives

Strategic objectives need to include changes in focus such as a move from looking at just Rights of Way to the broader Access Improvement remit. Norfolk County Council also uses this approach now.

Partnership working, access for all and unique selling points will underpin all strategic objectives.

Suggested additions and answers to questions:

- Lack of accessible holiday accommodation is a barrier to 'access for all' both on land and on the water.
- With limited budgets available, the strategy needs to clarify that 'access for all' cannot apply to every single path. In reality, the intention is to provide and promote as many fully accessible opportunities as possible.
- 'Access for all' is a government driver. Is this too broad a term? It could become meaningless.
- There should be a focus on multi-use access while remembering the legal constraints and landowner permissions required.
- 'Reusing disused railways' has a cycling and walking focus with no mention of horse riding. This is a missed opportunity.
- There needs to be awareness of user group conflicts and safety issues on multi-use access routes.

- The BA publication 'Broads by Bike' could identify routes that horses could use.
- Disabled access is poor on Broads' ferries.
- It is difficult to have multi-use access routes with surfaces that are suitable for all users.

(3) Main areas to consider

Suggested additions and answers to questions:

- The strategy needs to define 'green infrastructure'. It is not clear what this means.
- Publicity, information and knowing where to access the Broads is essential.
- The strategy should include all user groups throughout the document. When omitted, the implication is that, for example, horse riding and angling does not have as much importance as other recreational uses.
- Links to tourism should be included as a main area for consideration.

(4) Walkers

- The Authority and partners need to negotiate new permissive path routes to help connectivity.

(5) Cycling

- Broads Cycling Country Phase 2 will include routes that fill the noticeable gaps on the map shown.

(6) Horse riding

- Identify bridleway to footpath to bridleway issues before the 2026 deadline.
- Visitors need somewhere to park horseboxes before using bridleways.
- Identify access that is wide enough to allow cantering sections segregated from other users.
- Protect current bridleways from narrowing due to vegetation encroachment.
- Think about horse riding provision in the next phases of the Three Rivers Way project.

(7) Water access and angling

- Identify multiple access and car parking options for users. This needs to include reinstating previously used access routes or sites.

- Car parking and trailer parking for small craft needs to be included in any slipway project work. This is likely to involve negotiations with landowners.
- Identify places suitable to pull in to look at views of the water and the Broads landscape and try to get these included on ordnance survey mapping.
- Use the Right to Roam for Waterways idea (River Wye example). Anglers have to pay for some access.

(8) Extra ideas - Youth engagement

- Link to Water, Mills and Marshes (WMM) to get ideas from children. The WRO agreed to talk to the WWMM Project Manager.
- Link to Easton College and Sixth Form Colleges to get ideas from students.

(9) Next steps

- Broads Engage Workshop (6th November 2018).
- Update report (December 2018 BLAF meeting).
- Mooring elements submitted to Navigation Committee for comment.
- Final draft (March 2019 BLAF meeting).

1/6 Broads Engage Workshop – priorities for working with Norfolk County Council on access development through the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan

Forum members took part in a workshop activity to identify access opportunities on mapping provided. The Authority will use the information provided to help structure the Broads Engage Workshop. The SWR thanked Forum members for their input.

1/7 To receive any other items of urgent business

No further items.

1/8 To note the date of the next meeting

The date for the next meeting is Wednesday 05 December 2018 at 2pm.

The meeting ended at 4.30pm.

Chairman