

External Funding Strategy
Report by Head of Strategy and Projects

Summary: This report updates Members on the recent progress made in developing an approach to securing more funding and support from external sources. An interim strategy for the next 12 months is proposed for the Authority to consider.

Recommendations:

- (i) That the conclusions from the workshop led by the South Downs National Park be noted.
- (ii) That the priorities identified in Section 4 of the report be supported.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Members will remember that after a small working group met to discuss possible ways of increasing funding from external sources at the local level, a series of steps were agreed as a way forward. These have been progressing at differing speeds alongside informal conversations with a number of charitable trustees and this paper seeks to bring members up to date and identify the next steps.
- 1.2 Since the initial work, the National Parks Partnership has been successfully established and launched. The Broads Authority has been actively supporting this with the Authority's Vice Chair sitting on their board and officers providing useful data to support initial discussions with one potential corporate supporter.
- 1.3 Individually national park authorities have been investigating external funding sources and recently this knowledge was brought together in a workshop held in London facilitated by the South Downs. The South Downs NPA has been working with The Management Centre and at the recent National Parks UK AGM, held in the Broads, argued strongly for joined up approach to external funding, beyond the corporate approach already in hand with National Park Partnerships. This report examines the advice from The Management Centre, the progress the Broads Authority has been making and sets out an interim external funding strategy for the next year for Members to consider.

2 Lessons from the South Downs

2.1 The work with The Management Centre has had the aims of establishing the sources of private funding potentially available to the SDNPA and their characteristics and recommending the best routes to diversify income generation.

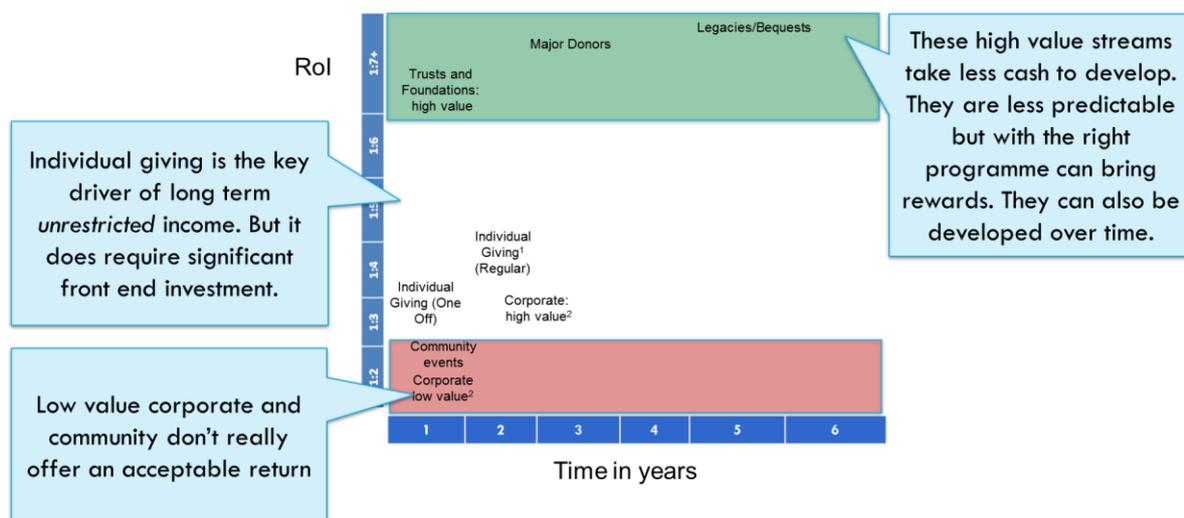
2.2 A strength identified in the research is the term National Park which is a “widely known and admired brand” and the variety of project work allows for engagement with funders across a broad range of interests.

2.3 Three significant challenges were identified:

- **Raising awareness** of National Parks is vital and the work of National Parks UK in doing so is crucial
- **Ownership of assets** can be important in generating commercial income
- A **standalone charitable vehicle** is necessary to maximise fundraising income

2.4 On these we are well placed to support National Parks UK with Jacquie Burgess as the recently elected Chair. The Authority owns very little in the way of assets so the potential here is very small. But the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Charitable Trust is up and running and closer working with the Authority has been identified by both parties as a priority.

2.5 The following table was presented at the workshop indicating the opportunities for fundraising in the private market.



2.6 The workshop concluded with five key points which are listed below with a Broads Authority response.

Key Summary Point	Broads Authority response
National Parks have the brand and demographic to fundraise profitably - need projects or concrete activities that will win support.	We need to identify the key projects which we want to fund raise for. This should stem from the creation of the new Broads Plan where priorities will be identified and the role for the Authority clarified.
We need to create vehicle/s to allow charitable fundraising.	Rather than establish a new body it would be good to build on the positive discussion and prioritise our joint work with the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Charitable Trust.
A large scale campaign will help to build expertise and momentum.	Accept the need to work with the 14 other national parks on a large scale, but likely long term, campaign. For example a long term ambition could be the establishment of a national parks membership scheme.
NPAs have sufficient visitor statistics and local communities with which to fundraise successfully from the mass individual market but this needs up-front investment and long-term commitment.	The Broads Authority has the advantage of already having a relationship with 10,000 boat owners. We need to work out how to build on this.
To do any fundraising you need skilled fundraisers , backed up by high-level support, and buy-in from delivery staff and senior governance and leadership figures.	We have members of staff with a high level of skill and a proven track record in this regard although they are currently primarily dealing with existing schemes. Once the bid to HLF has been submitted that will free up a window of staff time to focus on this area of work. However we may wish to consider retaining/employing a specific fund raiser if we are ambitious with the projects we wish to pursue.

3 Progress

3.1 National Park Partnerships

3.1.1 The board and Development director have started making approaches to significant UK companies. These have generally been well received though it is clear there are existing relationships which will take a time to exit from even if the offer is liked. Broads Authority staff have been involved in providing detailed information for one company that has potential to develop into a funded scheme if supported by the company's management team. Experience is already confirming that company support away from 'social responsibility' topics is very much dependent on reinforcing business requirements.

3.2 HLF Landscape Partnership Scheme

3.2.1 With the Stage 1 approval for Water, Mills and Marshes, it is important to ensure the submission of the Stage 2 bid in May 2017 is successful to enable spending of the £4M+ from 2018. This is a partnership process but will require the input of a significant amount of officer time to effectively plan the projects and coordinate submission and then to follow through with implementation. The results within the project area should be substantial and the planned legacy will retain the credibility of the Authority with the Heritage Lottery Fund and open the door for further key work on mills, access, nature conservation and people engagement.

3.3 European Funding etc.

3.3.1 The Authority is keeping aware of European Funding opportunities with the CANAPE submission, helping Hickling Broad and surrounding peat areas, awaiting feedback. Contact is being retained with other project developers though we have to ensure we do not over-stretch the staff resource or create commitments for matching funding we do not have. A Natural England led initiative to help wet grassland has identified the Broads as one work area and details are being developed for a significant bid to HLF and LIFE funds that will especially help wet grassland reserves. [The outcome of the EU referendum will influence this topic but at this stage it is too early to be clear about timing etc.]

3.4 UEA

3.4.1 A meeting was held with the Vice Chancellor of UEA about closer cooperation around research where significant funds are still available. The Authority has been strengthening links at a number of levels and has submitted ideas to a couple of work strands that may bring dividends in the future.

3.5 Local Corporate Funding

3.5.1 A draft framework for approaching local businesses has been previously shared with members. At the core of it is to explore building new relationships that help raise the profile for the Broads National Park and engage people in understanding, enjoying and caring for it. The advice from the NPP Development Director that this brings low level financial returns suggests such an initiative will be most successful if done alongside the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Charitable Trust and explores more than just financial support. The Authority and Trust will need to consider appropriate people to lead such work and have a clear set of priorities requiring support.

3.5.2 The Authority has started a 24 day summer internship utilising a UEA undergraduate to investigate in depth the potential for local giving from businesses and charitable trusts. The student will be asked to create an insight into the interests and potential for local companies and trusts and help refine some of the support material that can be used to develop relationships.

This should make a firm foundation for seeking project support. Such material will be available to share with relevant trusts.

3.6 Charitable Bodies

3.6.1 There are of course a range of existing bodies, many of whom have charitable status, also seeking funds. These include major conservation bodies and small trusts with very focused interests. Within this sector are trusts that the Authority has direct involvement with through the appointment of trustees (e.g. Whitlingham Charitable Trust, How Hill Trust, Norfolk Windmills and Pumps Trust). Discussion with relevant trustees is seeking to clarify immediate needs, likely ways forward and how or where the Authority could or should play a part.

3.6.2 One opportunity the Authority is investigating is whether it can support a range of the active fund-seeking trusts in the Broads by commissioning a training day on external funding applications to help raise knowledge and skills and boost successful applications for support. This would be offered to the Trustees of the many Broads Trusts we know to help them in their own forward plan. It would conclude with a discussion to clarify how the Broads Authority sees its role and activities in the future.

3.7 RSPB, Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Suffolk Wildlife Trust and National Trust

3.7.1 These major charities are important partners in the delivery of the Broads Plan objectives and the Landscape Partnership.

3.8 Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Charitable Trust

3.8.1 A number of discussions have taken place and the Chair and CEO have attended a Trust meeting. Closer working is becoming clearer and a framework for common action is being developed and hopefully will be finalised and agreed over the summer. By working in tandem it will be easier to approach local businesses with a range of opportunities to become involved in making the Broads better. There may also be opportunities to use the contacts of the Authority to promote the aspirations of the Trust and help secure new regular donations. The Authority should be able to help develop and submit projects for support and in some cases manage the implementation of projects that meet the Trust's criteria of improving the Broads. There could also be cooperation about profile raising helping people understand funding needs and achievements.

3.9 Whitlingham Charitable Trust (WCT)

3.9.1 This charity is in a rather special position in that the Authority is one of the two principal bodies appointing trustees, - the other is the Trustees of the Arminghall Settlement - and the Authority also provides services to the Trust. WCT are working through a process to identify their priorities for implementation and matching this against existing income. This will generate a preferred list of priority projects and are likely to collaborate with the Broads

3.9.2 Authority in seeking appropriate external funds. There is also an opportunity to use the Broads Charitable Trust to support the small scale projects at the Park identified by the Trustees.

3.9.3 One point worth consideration is whether Broads Authority Members might want to consider its longer term vision for the Park so that it can give guidance to its appointed Members to the Trust.

3.10 How Hill Trust (HHT)

3.10.1 HHT delivers a valuable education service primarily focused on school children. At a recent meeting with some of the Trustees it was clear that the Trust's immediate target has been to put its finances on a firm footing and it is making excellent progress in this regard. It is intending to launch a 50 year appeal in the Autumn to raise substantial funds towards the maintenance of the building.

3.10.2 An issue that emerged from the meeting was the opportunity for the Broads Authority and the How Hill Trust to develop a longer term vision for the How Hill Estate and how they, as the two main owners, could work together to deliver their ambitions. It is suggested that while this is not an urgent matter the Chief Executive takes it forward with the Trust Director.

3.11 Norfolk Mills and Pumps Trust (NMPT)

3.11.1 The Broads Authority has the opportunity to appoint two Members to the NMPT. Norfolk County Council officers who provide direct support to the Trust are working on a Transition Funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Bid to help update the Trust to meet future needs. It is suggested that the Authority awaits the outcome of that process before appointing a Member to the vacant place on the Trust.

3.12 Wherry Yacht Charter, Waveney Stardust, Nancy Oldfield Trust, Waveney Sailability

3.12.1 The Authority does not have a direct relationship with these charities, for example in terms of appointing Members to their governing bodies, but has worked with them and supported them from time to time in their work to make the Broads better.

4 Interim Strategy

4.1 To steer the next phase of work looking at external funding we are proposing to build on these existing priorities

4.2 National Priorities

4.2.1 Collaborative working with the national park family is absolutely critical to raise national awareness of the Parks and their needs in a new funding environment. The three priorities are:

1. Continue to support the work of National Parks UK in raising the profile of the 15 National Parks.
2. Support National Park Partnerships in their ambitions with the corporate sector and be prepared to react quickly and professionally to opportunities that may present themselves.
3. Respond positively to a collaborative initiative regarding other fund raising opportunities.

4.3 Local Priorities

4.3.1 In the interim it is proposed that the following 5 activities are considered as the priorities associated with external funding:

- **Top priority** is to ensure the Stage 2 bid for 'Water, Mills and Marshes' Landscape Partnership is successful and implementation happens in full
- **Second Priority** is to develop a strong and productive relationship with the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Charitable Trust for mutual benefit. Define a way of working together and establish a programme of collaboration for the short and longer term
- **Third Priority** is to use the review of the Broads Plan to identify the priorities for action over the coming 5 years to make the Broads better. Embedded in this process needs to be consideration of the priorities for the Broads Authority in progressing the Broads Plan. Members will be asked to review the strategic priorities that emerge and provide guidance on the Authority's work priorities. It is likely this will require additional funding and those needs will form the core of an external funding strategy
- **Fourth Priority** is to continue to develop the potential European funding bid for Hickling – CANAPE - and to support Natural England/England Biodiversity Group's Wet Grassland bid for EU Life and HLF funding
- **Fifth Priority** is to complete the internship and produce a portfolio of information about potential supporters and 'appeal information' sharing this with the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Charitable Trust to inform future collaborative activities

4.3.2 After submission of the HLF Landscape Partnership Scheme Stage 2 application in May 2017, there will be an opportunity to use the following six months to work up some additional significant project bids and an overall external funding strategy which would steer the Authority's short and longer term options. This is likely to tie into ideas from National Park UK for a long term collaborative approach.

5 Risk Analysis

The risks associated with this work include:

5.1 Reputational

- 5.1.1 Without exploring the potential for new funding it is possible the progress the Authority has seen in implementing Broads Plan objectives will decline as public funds are tighter.
- 5.1.2 Other bodies seeking funding may be concerned that the Broads Authority takes a more proactive role in seeking additional funding. This will require tactful but robust handling with a focus on making things better for the Broads.
- 5.1.3 Working in partnership with other bodies requires a suitable level of trust to ensure common aims are met and partners are given respect and are not disadvantaged.
- 5.1.4 Some approaches to new funding sources could be unsuccessful. This in itself is not likely to be problem as long as the approach and subsequent discussions are undertaken to a high standard.

5.2 Operational

- 5.2.1 Harder choices are being faced as insufficient funds are present to meet all expectations. As future fund-raising will also need to be prioritised and prepared to avoid rash, and hasty decisions, this could mean delays or the end of certain activities.
- 5.2.2 Planned and effective fund raising will require adequate levels of resources. This can lead to a re-direction of time and energy (particularly within the staff where many activities are only supported by individuals) and hard choices being made about what are the priorities. Ideally choices will be made that if they create shortages in certain aspects, overall there will be gains for the implementation of the Broads Plan and the achievements of the Broads Authority.

Background papers: None

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Broads Plan Objectives: None

Appendices: None