

River Waveney Ferry Burgh St Peter

Report by Broads Local Access Forum Tourism and Local Business/Water Borne Recreational Users Representative and Senior Waterways and Recreation Officer

Summary:	This report provides members with a summary of the access opportunities presented by the newly re-opened ferry at the Waveney River Centre at Burgh St Peter and seeks members' views on the potential for developing these opportunities through the Integrated Access Strategy.
Recommendation:	That members note the contents of the report and consider whether a project to maximise the opportunities afforded by the re-opened Burgh St Peter Ferry should be developed.

1 Background

- 1.1 The Waveney River Centre is situated at Burgh St Peter and provides extensive recreational facilities for visitors to the Broads. Facilities on the site include a marina, parking, camping sites for tents and touring caravans, a shop, pub, and boat, canoe and cycle hire.
- 1.2 On 26 May 2012 the Waveney River Centre re-opened the passenger ferry that used to run over the River Waveney until approximately 50 years ago. The ferry has capacity for 12 passengers, runs throughout the year and can be used on demand by phoning a published mobile phone number.
- 1.3 The reintroduction of a ferry in this location provides an important crossing point on the River Waveney as the next opportunity to cross the river upstream is at Beccles and downstream at St Olaves.

2 Existing Public Rights of Way

- 2.1 The reintroduction of the ferry presents opportunities for visitors to the Broads to link the existing rights of way and road network on either side of the River Waveney. On the Suffolk bank the ferry docking point links to a public footpath which in turn links to the Angles Way long distance trail which continues to Beccles. Additionally the extensive network of public rights of way on Carlton Marshes can be accessed from this point which provides links to the Suffolk Wildlife Trust reserve at Carlton Marshes and Oulton Broad where there are bus and rail services.
- 2.2 On the Norfolk bank there are a number of quiet lanes and public rights of way linking Burgh St Peter with the villages of Aldeby, Toft Monks, Wheatacre and Haddiscoe.

- 2.3 Norfolk County Council has recently received funding via the RDPE Waveney Valley programme for a project to promote the Angles Way. The aim is to promote the Angles Way as a green corridor for visitors and the local community; develop links between market towns and services; and improve access for all. The route is currently being audited and will be upgraded to a similar standard to that of the National Trail at Peddars Way and the Norfolk Coastal Path with a focus on access improvement in areas near to public transport links, key features and residential populations. As part of this project, Norfolk County Council is in the early stages of developing a marketing plan linked to existing plans for the Waveney Valley; this will engage local businesses on or close to the Angles Way; attract more people to walk and use the route, support “green tourism” opportunities and the green economy with sustainable transport links.

3 New Access Opportunities

- 3.1 As mentioned at paragraph 2.1 the reintroduction of the ferry service presents opportunities for the existing rights of way networks and facilities in the area to be linked. For example, by using the ferry journey distance between Oulton Broad and Burgh St Peter is reduced from approximately 15 miles to approximately 2.5 miles.
- 3.2 This means that visitors to the Broads have the ability to access far more recreational facilities on foot during their visit and the opportunity to access the public transport network to go further afield.
- 3.3 Additionally there are a number of published cycle routes in the Broads that visitors would be able to access including Broads by bike route 13 in the Burgh St Peter area, Broads by bike route 14 in the Toft Monks area and other cycle routes linking areas like Brundall and Buckenham and Norwich and Reedham.

4 Potential for Developing the Cycle Network

- 4.1 Currently there is no right to take a bicycle on the public rights of way that lead to the ferry crossing point on the Suffolk bank. However, as it stands, the ferry does present the possibility of extending and promoting the use of the existing publicised routes by using the cycle hire facilities at Waveney River Centre. If a cycle route to the ferry on the Suffolk bank could be negotiated it would open up the possibility of developing a regional cycling route linking Oulton Broad and Norwich using quiet lanes and crossing the River Waveney at Burgh St Peter Ferry and the River Yare at Reedham.
- 4.2 The development of such a proposal would require discussion with and the involvement of, a range of partners including Suffolk County Council, Norfolk County Council, the Broads LAF, Norfolk LAF, Suffolk LAF, Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Sustrans and local landowners.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 One of the core principles proposed for adoption in the development of the Broads Integrated Access Strategy is that access opportunities should be linked with the public transport network. Further, the development of access hubs where a range of recreational access facilities can be used by visitors is advocated by the Broads Local Access Forum. The re-opening of the ferry at Burgh St Peter provides an opportunity for development in both these areas and members are invited to consider whether the development of a project to maximise links between the access networks in Norfolk and Suffolk and create a new regional cycle route using the Burgh St Peter and Reedham ferries should be included in the rights of way improvement plan section of the integrated access strategy.

Background papers: Nil

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Broads Plan Objectives: TR1, TR2, TR3

Appendices: Nil