

Climate Change Stakeholder Engagement Project
Report by Head of Strategy and Projects

Summary:	The Broads Authority is working with partner organisations to involve a wider set of stakeholders in considering how the special qualities of the Broads might change due to climate impacts and what the adaptation options might be. The outline approach and timetable for the project is detailed along with the priority stakeholders being targeted. The information obtained will help produce a better climate adaptation plan as part of the National Adaptation Programme
Recommendation:	Members of the Forum consider how they might contribute to promoting and supporting this project with their various constituents and contacts and to consider whether they might wish to be involved in a workshop later in the year.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The current run of unusual weather has certainly reinforced beliefs that dealing with a variable climate is going to be important to people living and working in the Broads. The Broads Authority identified through the Broads Plan that planning for the long term future of the Broads in response to climate change and sea level rise is one of its three priorities. It has set itself the target to update the preliminary climate adaptation plan by summer 2014 to submit to Defra as part of the National Adaptation Programme.
- 1.2 To do this successfully the Authority is very well aware of the benefit of working closely with the other main agencies. It established the Climate Change Adaptation Panel in 2009 consisting of the Authority, the Environment Agency, Natural England, the National Farmers Union, UEA and Norfolk local authorities to coordinate actions. The Panel identified the need to work with a wider set of stakeholders to understand the likely climate impacts, the implications for the special qualities of the Broads and to start identifying adaptation options to get the best from the predicted changes.

2 Stakeholder Engagement Project

- 2.1 To enable this exploration the Broads Authority is leading on a project to establish dialogue with interested parties and develop a better perspective on how the community views adaptation choices. The project is targeting four main groups of stakeholders initially. Those businesses that manage the land and water; the businesses that utilise those assets; parish councils; and

young people between the age to 16 and 26 though we will happily work with any interested parties.

2.2 There will be four phases to the project:

2.2.1 **Information phase** from May to July but continuing gently throughout.

Aim: To let people know that the Broads Authority wants to meet with stakeholders to enable them to contribute to the development of a plan to help the special qualities of the Broads adapt to the changing climate and to start sharing the headlines of climate impacts in the Broads.

2.2.2 **Connect phase** from June to September/October.

Aim: To meet people in small groups and enable them to consider how the changing weather and environment could impact on their lives/locality in terms of the special qualities of the Broads and what could be done about it.

2.2.3 **Assimilation phase** from October to January.

Aim: To use the information provided to revise the likely impacts and adaptation choices to provide sufficient information to determine a plan of action.

2.2.4 **Planning phase** from January to April.

Aim: To create a plan of action to guide the work over the short and medium term to help people adapt the Broads to the changing climate.

2.3 Currently the Authority is establishing the project team led by Simon Hooton with the help of Maria Conti who will be joined by volunteers and hopefully a UEA student or two to ensure we are right up to date with climate science. Their work will be aided by support from officers of other agencies and a reference group made up of representatives of the Adaptation Panel and the main stakeholders being approached, who can give advice on how best to involve and inform the people we want to reach. There will also be a pool of expertise we can draw on to try and answer the technical questions that might be raised.

2.4 Preliminary work about implications and adaptation options suggest that the main issues will revolve around the management of water; dealing with possible droughts, saline incursion, extreme rainfall events and the threat of flooding from rain and sea. By focussing on simple scenarios we hope to pull together views on how to tackle these issues and whether an engineering led response with higher walls and barriers will be more suitable than making space for water and living with more natural processes.

2.5 The other vital work at this stage is to draw together a pack of factual information to share, which will create a common understanding of the science and issues. This will also seek to direct people to more details to aid the debate.

- 2.6 Initially the project will work with small numbers as the process and content is tested and developed. Using helpful conduits (such as the NFU to reach farmers and Broads Tourism to reach their members) we will bring people together and listen carefully to the responses made, helping present information in a way that is relevant to their priorities and enable us to use their knowledge and insight.
- 2.7 Although the action plan may come up with specific changes that are needed on the ground, it is likely to also include the need for more monitoring and research, planning development and exploration of governance mechanisms to ensure effective decisions can be made. That is why we need to start the work now to give the time to plan properly, as well as ensuring today's decisions are not limiting future options or wasting resources unnecessarily.

3 How The Forum Can Help

- 3.1 Forum members can be another conduit to reach out to people to explain the ideas behind the project and encourage stakeholders to get involved. Tackling climate change can be seen as daunting or irrelevant. We hope that by relating to the special qualities of the environment around people and their everyday lives we can use their perspectives to create an effective future plan that gets the best for the Broads from the inevitable changes. In due course the Forum may wish to undertake a workshop themselves to consider implications and adaptation options related to access matters.

Background papers:	Nil
Author:	Simon Hooton
Date of report:	24 May 2013
Broads Plan Objectives:	CC2, CC3, CC4
Appendices:	Nil