

# Broads Authority

26 July 2024

Agenda item number 19

## Report on outside bodies- Whitlingham Charitable Trust 2023/24

Report by Matthew Bradbury

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### Purpose

To update the Authority on the activity of the BA appointed Trustees of Whitlingham Charitable Trust and the strategic priorities relating to the Environmental, Social and Economic Impact of Whitlingham Country Park.

### Broads Plan context

Theme E: Promoting understanding and enjoyment

Theme F: Connecting and inspiring communities

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## 1. Introduction

1.1. As per the Articles of the Whitlingham Charitable Trust (BA being a Member), in 2023, the Authority has appointed four Trustees to the Board of the charity – all of whom must act in the best interests of the Trust.

1.2. The Trustees are Anne Crotty; Tracey Brown; David Diggins and Matthew Bradbury.

1.3. In the last year, the Board of the Trust has been active in seeking improvements to the charitable impact and sustainability of the Trust and Whitlingham Country Park, over which it holds a 99 year lease.

## 2. Review of 2023/24

2.1. In 2023/24, the priorities of the Trust (and therefore our involvement in its governance) have been:

- i. **Improving the facilities of the park** - Including the installation on Changing Places toilets, resurfacing of paths and the management of water level infrastructure
- ii. **Promote and deliver partnerships and programmes that improve Health and Wellbeing** – Including safe opportunities for exercise (improved facilities), cultural events – activities included outdoor cinema, open farm Sunday etc.

- iii. **Developing volunteering and education** – WCP has a growing number of regular volunteers and has been involved in work experience and internships.
- iv. **Enhancing habitats enabling nature to flourish** – The Trust is continually improving habitats and its carbon footprint. The installation of renewable energy (solar) is a priority and working with climate change (mainly the weather and water levels) remains a challenge. The team hope to receive a Green Flag award for the park in 2024.
- v. **Working with partners** – The relationships with the Arminghall Settlement, Broads Authority, Norwich City Council, South Norfolk Council, our tenants and a large number of on-site and off-site organisations and individuals remain key to the success of the park and the Trust.
- vi. **Developing a sustainable operating model** - In addition to parking, rental income and investment income – the Café has been taken ‘in-hand’ and through much hard work and capital improvements, is operating successfully through a subsidiary, providing gift aided income to the Trust. Resources are in place to develop fundraising with some notable early success. The events programme is developing and income generating partnerships are being built.
- vii. **Developing the team** – The team has grown with the addition of a Fundraising and Development Officer and subject to affordability, more resources are planned.

### 3. Financial implications

- 3.1. There are no direct financial implications for the Authority and the Trust is in good financial health with a clear strategy and priorities.

### 4. Risk implications

- 4.1. None.

### 5. Conclusion

- 5.1. The appointment of the four Trustees has worked well. We all have different, but relevant skills and experience to bring to the Trust and we hope that our involvement and interest brings value to the impact that the organisation and Whitlingham Country Park offers to the city, the community and to visitors. Indeed, we have all enjoyed our role in supporting such an important asset for the city and the ‘National Park’.

Author: Matthew Bradbury – on behalf of Anne, Tracey and David

Date of report: 04 July 2024

Background papers: None

[Broads Plan](#) strategic objectives: Themes E and F