

Demasting and 24-hour Moorings
Report by Senior Waterways and Recreation Officer

Summary: This report provides members with an update on the current position regarding the development of new 24-hour moorings and demasting moorings in the navigation area. The report identifies potential new mooring sites and seeks members' views on which sites should be prioritised. Additionally the report provides members with information on the estimated cost of maintaining the existing level of 24-hour mooring provision and identifies that in the future the Broads Authority will have to consider whether it is able to take on liability for the piling at some of the existing 24-hour moorings from the Environment Agency.

1 Background

- 1.1 The Broads Authority currently provides 66 24-hour moorings and a number of demasting moorings throughout the navigation area. Most of these moorings have been developed on flood defence piling installed by the Environment Agency, or its predecessor authorities, or on piling installed by the Port and Haven Commissioners. In some cases the Authority owns the land and has responsibility for the maintenance of the piling. In others the Authority leases the land but has no responsibility for maintaining the piling which provides the vertical quay heading for boats to moor up to.
- 1.2 Since 2006 the provision of moorings by the Authority has been guided by a Mooring Strategy which was developed by officers working with a Steering Group and wider consultation group which included representatives from the Authority's partner organisations and stakeholders. In adopting the Strategy the Authority applied a number of overarching principles regarding the provision and development of moorings throughout the navigation area. These included a commitment on the part of the Authority to the continued provision of free 24-hour moorings in the Broads but the Strategy also recognised that the Authority could not be the sole provider of moorings in the Broads.
- 1.3 The Strategy was reviewed in 2009, and in 2013 the Strategy was subsumed into the Authority's Integrated Access Strategy which, while adopting the core principles of the Mooring Strategy, also applies other guiding principles and a number of key objectives to the delivery of mooring improvements in the Broads. The Integrated Access Strategy also carries forward the Authority's aim to have demasting moorings at all four quadrants of bridges spanning the navigation.

2 Potential Mooring Projects

2.1 Table 1 identifies the potential 24-hour mooring projects that officers have identified since the adoption of the Integrated Access Strategy.

Table 1

Location	Length (m)	Existing frontage	Estimated cost	IAS Site Assessment
River Bure true left bank near Dove House Farm	80	Flood defence piling would require the installation of mooring path, posts and safety features	£25,000	High priority. Site in main gap in mooring provision. Also identified as priority site for new moorings by NSBA/Broads Society and BHBF.
River Bure true left bank near Mautby Marsh Farm	107	Rock roll would require the installation of pontoons and initial dredging with ongoing dredging in the future.	£50,000 (assuming installation of two layby pontoons and associated dredging)	High priority. Site in main gap in mooring provision.
River Yare true right bank near Hardley Cross	150	Flood defence piling would require the installation of mooring path, posts and safety features.	£37,500	High priority. Site in gap in mooring provision and has been identified as potential mooring site since the publication of the Mooring Strategy in 2006. Also links to Wherryman's Way circular walk.
River Yare true right bank Rockland Short Dyke	Total length 4750	Flood defence piling would require installation of mooring path, posts and safety features	£37,500 (assuming minimum of 150m)	Medium Priority. Valued as informal mooring giving isolated mooring experience but not in major gap in mooring provision.
River Yare true right bank near Berney Arms	Total length 275	Flood defence piling minimal works required.	£20,000 (assuming minimum of 150m)	Medium priority. Moorings already provided in location by BA and others but potential for BA taking over more frontage and setting aside a section for boaters waiting to cross Breydon Water.

Ludham Bridge Staithe.		Flood defence piling minimal works required		Medium priority. Already available but not managed by BA.
River Bure South Walsham Fleet Dyke two sites	260	Flood defence piling works to stabilise mooring path and replacement of safety features posts etc. required.	£50,000	Medium Priority. Mooring already taking place on site and location is accepted as a mooring by the Environment Agency. BA has been in negotiation with EA to take over control of site for some time.
River Bure Hoveton Viaduct - repiling of existing mooring	319	Site leased complete repiling required.	Estimated contractor cost £319,000	Existing BA 24-hour mooring but needs repiling.

2.2 Table 1 identifies a number of potential mooring projects including the development of new moorings, formalising mooring already taking place in various locations and the repiling of a site already leased by the Broads Authority.

2.3 The Broads Authority has also identified that the provision of demasting moorings at either St Olave's Bridge or Acle Bridge is a corporate priority for the financial year 2013/14. Officers have assessed the potential for developing moorings at each site and identified four potential sites at each location. Three of the locations at St Olave's do not have piled edges and would require the installation of pontoons in the navigation channel as would two of the locations at Acle. As regard the other locations with piled edges it would be necessary to negotiate leases with the landowners if demasting moorings are to be developed at these sites. Normally the Authority would install two 11.5m pontoons at a site to provide a layby mooring and this would cost approximately £13,000.

3 Budget for Moorings Development

3.1 The budget available for the delivery of mooring projects for this financial year currently stands at £100,000. This comprises £50,000 from the Moorings Maintenance and Repair budget heading, £35,000 from navigation income which has been transferred to the projects pot and £15,000 which has been identified for the provision of a demasting mooring at either St Olave's or Acle Bridge.

- 3.2 Table 1 shows that a minimum budget of £223,000 would be required to deliver all the potential new 24-hour moorings that officers have identified and a further £316,000 would also need to be allocated to repile the existing mooring at Hoveton Viaduct. Clearly this is not feasible under current budget conditions and officers consider that the potential list of new moorings should be prioritised with a view to delivering some new moorings in the next two financial years and seeking funding to deliver other mooring projects at a later date if this proves to be feasible.

4 Asset Management - Financial Implications of Maintaining the Current Number of 24-hour Moorings

- 4.1 Members will be aware that the Authority is currently undertaking a major project to identify its assets and implement an asset management strategy for the future. Part of this work has involved producing a condition report on all the existing BA 24-hour moorings in order to assess when work will be required to maintain them to the standards required by the Authority's Safety Management System. This report, which is currently being finalised, has provisionally identified that, in order to maintain the majority of the existing 24-hour moorings in the system, the Authority will need to allocate a budget of approximately £108,000 per annum to cover the costs of repiling the existing structures as they reach the end of their useful lives (assuming that external contractors are used).
- 4.2 The Authority is also in discussion with the Environment Agency (EA) and its contractors Broadland Environmental Services Ltd (BESL) regarding the future maintenance of the piling at a number of the Broads Authority's 24-hour mooring sites for which the Authority currently has no responsibility for the maintenance of the piling. The EA has indicated that a number of these structures are no longer required for flood risk management purposes and it therefore intends to remove the piling unless the landowners or lessees, in this case the Broads Authority, are prepared to take on liability for the piled edges.
- 4.3 The Authority understands that the EA is currently discussing this matter with the relevant landowners and has asked the EA to provide information regarding the affected sites as soon as possible.
- 4.3 It will be necessary for this information to be made available in order for officers to be able to have a full understanding of the financial implications of the EA's proposals and to be able to recommend a strategic approach for the future regarding the maintenance and provision of moorings in the navigation area.

5 Officer Assessment of Potential Mooring Sites

- 5.1 Officers consider that the highest priority for the provision of new moorings is in the lower Bure area. This is the largest gap in mooring provision identified by the GIS analysis carried out to identify priority sites during the development of the Integrated Access Strategy. Further, the lower Bure has been identified

as a priority site by the Norfolk and Suffolk Boating Association (NSBA), the Broads Hire Boat Federation and the Broads Society during consultations with those organisations.

- 5.2 As identified in Table 1 above officers have identified two potential mooring sites in the lower Bure. The landowners of both sites have indicated that they are prepared to consider leasing the sites to the Broads Authority but officers consider that the site near Dove House Farm should be the priority as it has a hard piled edge and will not require dredging to be made suitable for mooring. Additionally the site is currently used informally for mooring purposes and both the NSBA and the Broads Society have stated that they would welcome a mooring at the location.
- 5.3 The second site that officers consider to be a priority is on the River Yare at Hardley Cross. This site has been identified as a priority since the mooring strategy was originally published in 2006 and scores highly against the Integrated Access Strategy project assessment criteria as it provides access to the Wherryman's Way long distance path and an extensive public rights of way network. Further, the site meets the Authority's aim of improving facilities in the southern rivers and is centrally placed in a recognised gap in mooring provision on the River Yare. The landowner of the site has also indicated that he would be prepared to enter into a lease with the Authority.
- 5.4 As regards demasting moorings, Table 1 shows that a number of potential sites have been identified at both St Olaves and Acle bridges. Officers have consulted on this issue and St Olaves is considered to be the priority by the Broads Society and Acle by the NSBA. Officers consider that St Olaves should be treated at the priority site for safety reasons. There is a history of boats getting into difficulty at the bridge due to the strong current conditions and unlike Acle Bridge there are no existing moorings that can be used in an emergency.
- 5.5 As mentioned at paragraph 3.1 there is a budget of £15,000 available specifically for the provision of demasting moorings. It is likely that pontoon moorings would be easier to deliver at both locations and this would pay for two pontoons. It would be feasible to install one pontoon at each location but, increased stability would be achieved by installing two pontoons together.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 To summarise the financial position in respect of moorings:

Budget (2013/14)

Moorings Maintenance and Repairs	£50,000	
Demasting mooring allocation	£15,000	
Projects Pot	£35,000	
		£100,000

Potential Expenditure

Repiling of Existing 24 Hour Moorings	£108,000 per annum
Potential new moorings (Table 1)	£223,000
Repiling Hoveton Viaduct moorings (2015)	£316,000
Demasting moorings at Acle and St Olaves	£ 30,000
Environment Agency moorings	£?

Note: This excludes regular maintenance of moorings

7 Conclusions

- 7.1 The provision of additional moorings is a high priority for boat owners according to recent surveys. There is also a potential major issue concerning current moorings provided by the Environment Agency as part of the flood defence. However, as can be seen from above there is a considerable gap between the financial provision and the costs of both maintaining the existing network and extending it.
- 7.2 Officers consider that the available budget for mooring provision should be apportioned between the potential mooring sites at Dove House Farm (£25,000), Hardley Cross (£37,500) and St Olaves (£15,000). It is also considered to be sensible to delay a decision about repiling Hoveton Viaduct mooring or other moorings where the piling is reaching the end of its useful life until full information is available from BESL about the future of the moorings that are no longer required for flood risk management purposes. This will enable a strategic view to be taken of the maintenance of the Authority's moorings for the future and allow for a full site prioritisation exercise to be carried out. This would leave approximately £24,500 available for other projects which would benefit the navigation or maintenance of existing moorings. Members' views are sought on this approach.

Background papers:	Nil
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Broads Plan Objectives:	NA5, TR2
Appendices:	None