

Collaboration with Norfolk County Council
Report by Chief Executive

Summary: This report updates Members on a range of collaborative work with Norfolk County Council.

Recommendations:

- (i) That the Authority supports Norfolk County Council's aspiration for a single management structure for the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Wash and North Norfolk Coast Natura 2000.
- (ii) That the Authority notes the areas of co-operation with Norfolk County Council and the progress that is being made.

1.1. Introduction

1.2. The Broads Authority has had a long and very productive relationship with Norfolk County Council and a number of new opportunities are emerging. It is for that reason that John Jones, Head of Environment in the Community and Environmental Services Department at the County Council has been invited to attend the meeting and give a presentation on our current collaborative work.

2. Management for the Wash and North Norfolk Coast

2.1. Norfolk County Council submitted a response to the National Park Review advocating a single management structure for the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Wash and North Norfolk Coast Natura 2000 reserve and European Marine Site. The following is a quotation from the submission which explains some of the context:

"There are clear parallels between the governance structure for each protected area with both geographic and management overlaps. Many organisations and agencies are present on both management groups and boards contributing both funding and resources to both the Norfolk Coast Partnership (NCP) and the Wash and North Norfolk Coast Marine Partnership (WNNMP). ...

An overarching designation to combine both partnership into a single organisation would represent a more streamlined and efficient use of time and resources, creating better value for money on a regional and national scale."

2.2. Map 1 below of the designations in Norfolk and Suffolk (See Appendix 1) drawn from the submission shows the spatial relationship between the two AONBs, the marine designations and the Broads.

2.3. It is recommended that the Broads Authority should formally endorse Norfolk County Council's proposal.

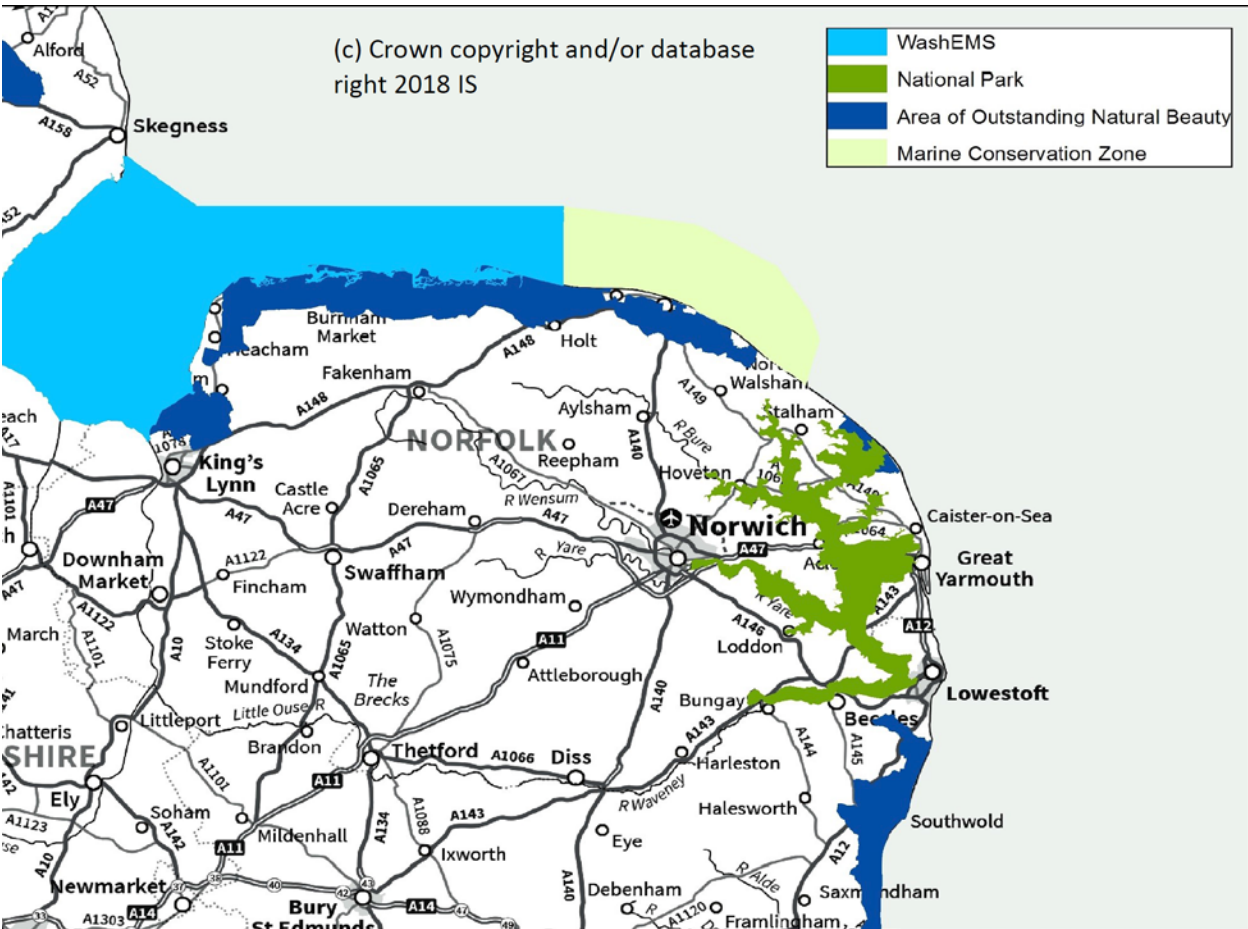


Figure 1. Map of designations in East Anglia

3. EXPERIENCE

3.1. The Environment Team at the County Council is currently bidding for funds for a large tourism-based project called 'EXPERIENCE'. Its aim is to tackle seasonality in tourism through expanding and capitalising on experiential travel. If successful it will bring in approximately £4 million of funding to Norfolk. Part of the project will be looking at experiences unique to Norfolk (including our wildlife, scenery, food and drink and active tourism) and how to promote these to visitors.

3.2. The Management Team have given careful consideration as to whether the Broads Authority should be a partner to the bid. We are of the opinion that there is an opportunity to build on the work with local businesses funded by Visit England in promoting the national parks in Germany and Australia under the banner of the National Park Experience Collection. Officer will be able to provide more information on this and the potential at the meeting.

4. Cycling and access initiatives

- 4.1. The Broads Authority and the County Council successfully collaborated on a bid for funding for the development of the first part of the cycle way called the 3 Rivers Way from Hoveton to Horning. More recently Members will recall that the two organisations along with Sustrans submitted a bid to implement a Dutch directional sign system for the Broads. Unfortunately the bid to New Anglia was unsuccessful.
- 4.2. The County Council is in the process of developing its new Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (NAIP). The draft plan emphasises the importance of the Broads for countryside recreation in the county and includes a priority action to “deliver the next phases of the 3Rivers Way in partnership with the Broads Authority, Sustrans and other local authorities. The NAIP also states that the County Council will “develop shared goals for improvements in the Broads” and seek to create annual joint action plans with the Authority in the future. This aspiration will be included in the Integrated Access strategy when it is reviewed this year. The Authority will continue to work with the County Council on promoting cycling and walking in the Broads.

5. Windmills in the Broads

- 5.1. Again there has been a long history of collaboration and joint work between the Authority and the County Council to maintain and restore the windmills in the Broads which are such an iconic feature of the landscape. The Water, Mills and Marshes project is making great strides through its Heritage Skills project in building a workforce to maintain the mills in the future and is programmed to carry out practical repairs to ten mills. However, the three mills at How Hill, which sit on land owned by the Authority and are quintessentially part of the Broads brand are outside the WMM area. The County Council is arranging for structural surveys of the three mills and Members will be given an update on the project.

6. Other Areas of Close Collaboration

- 6.1. Norfolk County Council is a key partner in the delivery of the Water, Mills and Marshes programme for example the Broads Authority is working with the Historic Environment Team on community archaeology, researching the history of the area from World War II backwards. Links have also been with the Museum and Library Services.

Background papers: None
Author: John Packman
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Broads Plan Objectives: Multiple
Appendices: None