



Large print Broadcaster 2024

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Welcome to the Broads National Park

...and a selection of all that there is to see and do

Information given in Broadcaster may have changed since the time of compilation. Please check details with places you plan to visit. Grid references (for example C2) refer to the map on page 4 of the printed version of Broadcaster.

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk

The visitor website for the Broads also has all you need to know about where to go and what to do, where to stay ashore and afloat, where to eat, boating, special events and everything else you need to enjoy the Broads by land and water.

Explore the Broads

Ten things to do from...

Hoveton and Wroxham

Since the early days of Broads holidays Wroxham, in the north, has been known as the capital of the Broads, but one of the interesting things about the Broads is that it can sometimes seem a bit elusive – are you in it, past it or not there yet?! The boundary follows the river valleys, so with five main rivers the Broads is shaped a bit like a hand. Is it the water (the broads, like shallow lakes) or is it the land, or

both? It's both. And can you be in a national park on the A1151 in Wroxham? Yes, you can! Some parts of the Broads countryside and waterways are immediately obvious, such as the view of the River Bure from Wroxham Bridge, while some others take a bit of exploring to find them...

1. Take a Broads National Park boat trip on wheelchair accessible Ra – see page 12 for details. Many other boating activities are available in Hoveton and Wroxham (B2/B3) – larger boat trips, paddlecraft and other day hire boats, and holiday boats.
www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/things-to-do/boating/boathire
2. The narrow-gauge Bure Valley Railway follows a scenic route to Aylsham. A path for walkers and cyclists runs beside the railway from its station at Wroxham. See page 28 for more details. Heading in the same direction on the river or by road you'll come to Coltishall (about 2.5 miles). See page 63 for a walk to do at Coltishall or have a stroll at Horstead Mill, just across the river from Coltishall. Staying with railways, there are monthly open days at Barton House (miniature) Railway, with a ferry to it from Wroxham Bridge.
www.bvrw.co.uk
3. A 20-minute walk from the information centre will take you to Caen Meadow by Castle Staithe, great for a stroll, a picnic and some waterbird watching. Follow Norwich Road (towards Norwich), turn right along Church Lane (which then bends to the left), then at the fork take Skinners Lane, which will take you to the entrance to Caen Meadow and then carries on into the countryside.
4. Wroxham Miniature Worlds (on Station Business Park, about 5 minutes' walk from the information centre) is the UK's largest

indoor modelling attraction.

www.wroxhamminiatureworlds.co.uk

5. Wroxham Barns, about 1.5 miles by road, has shops for crafts, and local food and drink, plus a children's farm and fun park. Talking of shopping and food, there are plenty of other local options as well, including Roys of Wroxham, still known as the world's largest village store, from when two brothers started a shop in Coltishall in 1895! www.wroxhambarns.co.uk

www.roys.co.uk/history

6. The lovely Hoveton Hall Gardens including lakeside and woodland walks, and a cafe are about 1.5 miles away by road.

www.hovetonhallestate.co.uk

7. BeWILDerwood (about 2 miles by road, with foot and cycle path) is a children's woodland adventure park. Bike hire is also available, see page 28.

www.beWILDerwood.co.uk

8. Barton Broad Boardwalk (just under 4 miles by road) is accessible to wheelchair users and will take you through mysterious wet woodland to a platform with a panoramic view over the broad.

www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

9. Salhouse Broad (about 3.5 miles by road) offers short walks, play space, canoe hire and camping. Across the broad is Hoveton Great Broad Nature Trail, accessible only by boat. Maybe hire one of those canoes? The village of Ranworth (about 6.5 miles by road) has another Broads National Park information centre and boat trips on Liana, our electric launch, plus lots of other things to do (see page 13). www.salhousebroad.org.uk

www.hovetongreatbroad.org.uk

www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

www.ranworthchurch.com

10. Our How Hill National Nature Reserve (see page 14), is just under 7 miles by road, near Ludham.

Beccles

While Wroxham may be the capital of the Broads, Beccles (D7), in the south, is one of the gateways to the Broads. It's been a flourishing market town since Anglo-Saxon times and the Old Market once housed a great fish market, particularly for herring, for which the east coast was famous. The New Market actually dates from the 14th century, but while there's lots of history to explore, it's not all old, there are lots of new things too.

www.visitbeccles.co.uk

1. St Michael's Church is right in the centre of town. It's unusual in having a separate tower, which you can climb for wonderful views of the surrounding Broads countryside. Beccles Museum will show you the history of Beccles and is housed in Lemn House, built around 1570 and restored and modernised – in the 1760s! www.becclesparish.org.uk
www.becclesmuseum.org.uk
2. The Friday Market in New Market is still going strong every Friday, 6am-4pm, offering lots of local products. Beccles Food and Drink Festival takes place each May.
3. Beccles also offers many boating opportunities with paddlecraft and other day hire boats. The stretch of the River Waveney between Beccles and Bungay is very green and tranquil. For more details on paddlesports see page 32.

4. If you'd rather let someone else take charge of boating, try the Big Dog Ferry, see page 29. Look out for otters, kingfishers and marsh harriers along the way and enjoy local brews, food and live music at its destination – the Locks Inn, Geldeston. Alternatively, you can do a circular walk from Beccles to Geldeston, see page 64. The Angles Way also goes west from Geldeston to Bungay, where you can explore the remains of medieval Bungay Castle.
www.visitbungay.co.uk
5. If you like to be in the water instead of on it, then the Lido is the place for you, with a children's adventure play area and a cafe too. All facilities are fully accessible.
www.beccleslido.com
6. The Public Hall offers concerts, films, theatre and other events, and Beccles also hosts antiques markets and a carnival. At Bungay (about six miles by road), the Fisher Theatre offers events and activities. www.becclespublichall.co.uk
www.fishertheatre.org
7. Beccles has lots of small specialist shops, many in interesting old buildings. There are plenty of tempting places for coffee, lunch, tea, and of course a drink and dinner if your shopping is very extensive... Many of the road names end in 'gate' (such as Blyburgate, Saltgate), coming from the Old Norse for street. Beccles also has 'scores', believed to come from an Old English word meaning to cut. They are little paths going down to the river, particularly from Northgate. They don't go along the river but were used for various 'industrial' activities and river access in the days of water transport.
8. If exploring the countryside is more your thing, then take a walk on Beccles Marsh Trail, heading east along the river from Beccles

Quay. You can do a circular route to return to Beccles and there's a short accessible route too.

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/walking

9. For more walking and wildlife, try Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Carlton Marshes Nature Reserve (about 7.5 miles by road). It has several trails, including accessible routes, plus play equipment and a cafe. The reserve has recently been extended and if you're on a boat there are moorings available. (If you're starting from Oulton Broad you can walk to the reserve in about 30 minutes.)

www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org

10. Oulton Broad (about 8 miles by road and another gateway to the Broads) is just a little further east, with boat trips, day boats for hire, Nicholas Everitt Park and Lowestoft Museum.

www.thesuffolkcoast.co.uk/suffolk-coast-towns-and-villages/oulton-broad

Hoveton & Wroxham Station is on the Bittern Line, with frequent daily trains from Norwich (journey time about 15 minutes). Beccles is on the East Suffolk Lines and Oulton Broad is on the Wherry Lines. For public transport details see page 80.

For lots more about everything to do in Hoveton, Wroxham and Beccles, go to www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk.

Fun days out

Hoveton, Ranworth and How Hill

The Broads National Park is the place for fun days out, and our small and friendly boat trips on Ra, Liana and the Electric Eel will all give you the chance to experience the wilder side of the Broads, with our staff aboard to ensure your safety and comfort. They all know and love the Broads, and whether you're a new or returning visitor, there's always something to discover.

Ra at Hoveton

Hoveton and Wroxham (B2/B3) lie either side of the River Bure. Take to the water here on Ra, our solar-powered boat and you'll find yourself drifting into another world, transported along a beautiful and tranquil stretch of the river, going to Caen Meadow on the short trip and into Bridge Broad and along to Belaugh on the long trip. Listen to the birdsong and relax in a green world, with meadows and wet woodlands on either side that can't be explored by land. Willow trees abound, watch for water birds such as herons and grebes, and in early summer look out for yellow irises. It's hard to believe that you're just minutes from the centre of Wroxham. You can also find out more about solar power, and how the Broads Authority and partners are developing the greener next phase of boating on the Broads.

These trips depart from Hoveton Riverside Park, close to Hoveton Broads Information Centre, Hoveton & Wroxham Railway Station (which is on the Bittern Line between Norwich and Sheringham) and the Bure Valley Railway's Wroxham Station (see page 28). There are free 24-hour moorings close by too. Ra is accessible via a ramp.

Trips

1 hour or 1½ hours, up to nine passengers (at driver's discretion) including up to four wheelchair users – please check when booking as number depends on the type of wheelchair

Easter / April, May, October: weekends, bank holidays, Easter week and local half-term only 10.30am (short trip), 11.45am (long trip), 2.30pm (short trip), 3.45pm (short trip)

June-September: daily 10.30am (short trip), 11.45am (long trip), 2.30pm (short trip), 3.45pm (short trip)

Cost

Short trip £10 adult, £8 child, £30 family; long trip £12 adult, £10 child, £40 family

Bookings

Hoveton Broads Information Centre, 01603 756097

Hoveton Broads Information Centre

Station Road, Hoveton

NR12 8UR

01603 756097

hovetonic@broads-authority.gov.uk

Open (free entry)

Easter / April, May, October: Monday-Friday 9am-1pm and 1.30-5pm; Saturday-Sunday 9am-5pm

June-September: daily 9am-5pm

More fun at Hoveton

For ideas on how to extend your fun day out, see page 6. Hoveton has toilets by the information centre, and plenty of shops and places to eat.

Liana at Ranworth

Set off on a voyage of discovery from Ranworth (C3) on board Liana, our Edwardian-style electric launch. As we cross Malthouse Broad, the activity of birds at the staithe subsides and there's a wonderful view of St Helen's Church, known as the cathedral of the Broads. We go past the entrance to Ranworth Broad (the broad and marshes are part of the Bure Marshes National Nature Reserve) and if we're very lucky, we may catch a glimpse of an otter or two as we pass along Ranworth Dam on our way to join the River Bure, heading towards Cockshoot Dyke. Birds peer out of the reed fringes at us, a kingfisher may be zipping across the water and look up too, a marsh harrier could be soaring overhead. These trips depart from Ranworth

Staithe, where there are moorings (with charge, see page 45) and parking.

Trips

55 minutes, up to eight passengers (at driver's discretion)

Easter / April-October: daily 10.30am, 2pm, 3pm

Cost

£10 adult, £8 child, £30 family

Bookings

Ranworth Broads Information Centre, 01603 756094

Ranworth Broads Information Centre

The Staithe, Ranworth

NR13 6HY

01603 756094

ranworthtic@broads-authority.gov.uk

Open (free entry)

Easter / April-October: daily 9am-5pm

More fun at Ranworth

Expand your fun day out with a free visit to Norfolk Wildlife Trust's floating Broads Wildlife Centre (follow the boardwalk from the staithe, taking you through the nature reserve). They also run a ferry service from the staithe (small charge) and boat trips. There are toilets near the staithe and refreshments available, including a tea shop at the church's Visitors' Centre. Climb the church tower for a bird's-eye view of the Broads.

How Hill

How Hill National Nature Reserve (C2), close to the village of Ludham, has something of everything that makes the Broads special. The River Ant runs through the reserve and there are reedbeds,

grazing marshes, wet woodlands and even a broad – all full of wildlife for you to discover.

Visit Toad Hole Cottage, lived in by generations of eel catchers, and imagine home life on the marshes in Victorian times. Then take a boat trip to see where the marshmen worked. Explore the Wildlife Walking Trail, Secret Gardens, riverside walks and maybe even Hathor, one of the Broads sailing wherries (see page 30). How Hill is still a working marsh – reed and sedge are cut for thatch, so you could see a marshman at work.

Entry to the site is free, there are public footpaths, and there's a free car park (open all the time) and 24-hour free moorings. Visitors with disabilities may find it helpful to telephone in advance to check if How Hill is sufficiently accessible for you. In the summer and autumn you may find it helpful to bring an insect repellent for the How Hill trails.

Toad Hole Cottage

How Hill, Ludham NR29 5PG

01603 756096

toadholetic@broads-authority.gov.uk

Open (free entry)

Easter / April, May, October: Monday-Friday 10.30am-1pm and 1.30-5pm; Saturday-Sunday 10.30am-5pm

June-September: daily 9.30am-5pm

The Electric Eel

Step on board, leave the River Ant behind and enter a tranquil, secret world, where reeds and flowers fringe the narrow dykes. Glide along until we stop for a short walk to a bird hide overlooking Reedham Water. The changing seasons bring changing wildlife. In May, the birds are showing off their breeding finery and, when the

sun shines, the hidden warblers are in full song. June sees the Norfolk hawker dragonfly and the swallowtail butterfly on the wing. Summer is the season for flowers, including water lilies. In autumn, the birds are on the move again. The summer visitors leave for warmer climes and soon, duck including teal and wigeon will arrive from the north, as the marsh moves towards winter.

Trips

50 minutes for up to six passengers (at driver's discretion)

Easter / April, May, October: weekends, bank holidays, Easter week and local half-term only 11am, 12pm, 2pm, 3pm

June-September: daily 10am, 11am, 12pm, 2pm, 3pm, 4pm

Cost

£10 adult, £8 child, £30 family (not suitable for children under two)

Bookings

Toad Hole Cottage, 01603 756096

Wildlife Walking Trail

Explore the trail to see wildlife for all seasons. In June look out for huge and very rare swallowtail butterflies; sometimes there's a second brood in August. Assistance dogs only on the trail please.

Open

Easter / April, May, October: daily 10.30am-5pm

June-September: daily 9.30am-5pm

Cost

£3 adult, £1.50 child, includes guide booklet

Riverside walks

From Toad Hole Cottage the riverside footpath continues downstream to Ludham Bridge and St Benet's Abbey. Or you can

take a short stroll upriver, past the boat shed, to Boardman's Mill. The path then goes on to Sharp Street.

How Hill gardens and refreshments

Explore the Secret Gardens, open all the time, entry by donation. These water gardens were created by local architect Edward Boardman for the family home at How Hill, which dates from 1904. The gardens are always lovely and secluded, and in early summer there are spectacular displays of azaleas and rhododendrons. Follow the signs from the car park, moorings and main house. The formal gardens surrounding the house are sometimes open too – check the signs on the gates.

Enjoy a tempting selection of cakes and savoury takeaway refreshments, all made in the How Hill house kitchen, with hot and cold drinks. There are delicious locally made ice creams too (also on sale at Toad Hole Cottage). Refreshments are available, with some outside seating, from the wooden education centre near the main house. Open for the Easter holidays, the late spring holiday, weekends until the summer holidays and then daily until 1 September.

01692 678555

www.howhilltrust.org.uk

Before you go on these three trips...

- You may find it convenient to book your boat trip in advance at holiday times when trips may be busy; as well as booking direct, you can also book at any Broads information centre
- Family tickets are for up to two adults and two children
- We are sorry we cannot take dogs, except assistance dogs, on any of these trips

- All passengers must wear the life jackets provided
- For spring and autumn trips bring warm, waterproof clothes
- Group bookings also available, including special dawn and evening trips – please ask for details

More info

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/information-centres

New for 2024 – boat trip gifts

Give your friends and family the experience of one (or more!) of our wildlife boat trips. Full details from our staff at Hoveton (Ra trips), Ranworth (Liana trips) and How Hill (Electric Eel trips).

Wildlife boat trip voucher

- Buy one ticket and get 25% off another one!
- Buy a ticket for Ra, Liana or the Electric Eel and get 25% off the same type of ticket (adult, child or family) for one of the other trips.
- See pages 11-17 for details of trips.
- Please present this voucher and your original ticket on arrival.

Thurne

Come and visit possibly the smallest national park information centre in the world – inside a former telephone box! Find out about Thurne and the Broads, then listen to recordings of Broads birds to hear who's calling.

The Street, Thurne, NR29 3AP

Open daily (calls are free)

Accessible days out

By land and water

National parks are for everyone and the Broads has lots to offer for fun accessible days out. Grid references (for example C2) refer to the map on page 4 of the printed version of Broadcaster.

Easy access paths and boardwalks

These are often the best way to explore the marshy areas of the Broads and many are on nature reserves. They are suitable for wheelchair users and people with pushchairs.

- Barton Broad C2, Filby Broad E3, Hickling Broad D2 and Ranworth Broad C3
01603 625540
www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk
- Beccles Marsh Trail D7
www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/walking
- Burgh Castle E5 and St Benet's Abbey, near Ludham D3
www.norfarchtrust.org.uk
- Carlton Marshes E7
01502 359480
www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org
- Chedgrave, Wherryman's Way C5
www.norfolk.gov.uk/out-and-about-in-norfolk/norfolk-trails/access-tested-walks
- Horstead Mill A2
- Rockland Marshes C5
01603 715191
www.rspb.org.uk

- Salhouse Broad B3
07795 145475 / 01603 722775
www.salhousebroad.org.uk
- Wheatfen, Surlingham B5 (short boardwalk to bird hide)
01508 538036
www.wheatfen.org

For more accessible ways to visit the Broads by land, see page 27 for cycling, page 28 for horse riding and page 25 for train travel.

Boat trips, boat hire and other boating activities

Please check with operators for details of wheelchairs and weights they can accommodate.

- Beccles – River Waveney – Waveney Stardust D7
Private cruises for groups with at least one person who requires accessible facilities. Two single-deck cruisers with hydraulic lifts, designed for wheelchair users and people with other disabilities, for groups of up to 12 passengers, up to six in wheelchairs. Skipper and crew included, galley and accessible toilet, other starting points may be available, book in advance.
07817 920502
www.waveneystardust.co.uk
- Horning – River Bure – Southern Comfort C3
Takes up to five wheelchair users on its scheduled trips or eight for private parties. Please book.
01692 630262
www.southern-comfort.co.uk
- Hoveton – River Bure – Ra B2 (see page 12)

- Martham – River Thurne – Ross’ Wildlife Boat Trips E2
Daily trips on a classic boat, departing from Martham Boats. Good access for those with limited mobility and room for one wheelchair user. Small group size allows commentary to be tailored to individual needs; popular with visually impaired visitors. Booking in advance by text is best, before 9.30am on the day of the trip; on the day, you may be able to book at departure point.
07791 526440
www.wildlife-boat-trips.co.uk
- Neatishead – River Ant – Nancy Oldfield Trust C2
Day activities for disabled and disadvantaged people: motor cruises with wheelchair lifts and kitchen and toilet facilities, pedal launches, sailing, canoeing, paddleboarding, wildlife watching and well-being on the water; regular slots sometimes available; self-catering residential bungalow for up to 10 people, for weekends and short breaks. Cruises also start from Ludham Bridge, exploring the rivers Ant, Bure and Thurne.
01692 630572
www.nancyoldfield.org.uk
- Oulton Broad – River Waveney – Waveney River Tours F7
Some wheelchair spaces available. Book in advance.
01502 574903
www.waveneyrivertours.com
- Oulton Broad – River Waveney – Waveney Sailability E7
Club for people with disabilities, offering the opportunity to sail in specially adapted dinghies.
07914 057678
www.waveneysailability.co.uk

- South Walsham – River Bure – Primula C3
Wheelchair-accessible boat trip (additional charge) when you visit Fairhaven Woodland and Water Garden. For best prices, book in advance.
01603 270449
www.fairhavengarden.co.uk
- Stalham – River Ant – Marsh Harrier C1
Boat trip on an Edwardian-style electric launch, with access for wheelchair users, based at the Museum of the Broads.
Booking essential.
01692 581681
www.museumofthebroads.org.uk
- Wroxham – River Bure – Broads Tours B3
Wheelchair spaces on two river trip boats, steps to navigate for boarding. Pre-booking is essential. Wheelchair users are situated on the top deck, where there is an accessible toilet on both boats. There's also accessible day boat hire (available for three hours or more) for up to five people, including one wheelchair user – with a maximum lift of 350kg.
01603 782207
www.broadstours.co.uk

Moorings

Most Broads Authority 24-hour moorings are level and without steps.

Angling

These places have platforms or other access suitable for wheelchair users. They are free or for use with day tickets. For more angling info see Try angling on page 44 and these sites:

www.broads-authority.gov.uk/angling

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/angling

River Yare

- Buckenham Ferry C5
- Postwick – platforms upstream of Ferry Lane B4

River Waveney

- Bungay Cherry Tree Angling Club C7 – membership and day or week tickets from Angling Direct, Beccles 01502 713379 and other local outlets
www.bungaycherrytree.co.uk
- Ellingham – 1 platform C7
- Worlingham Staithe – platforms E7

River Bure

- Upton Dyke D3
- River Thurne
- Ludham – Cold Harbour Farm D3
- Martham Pits E2 – day tickets from Co-op shops in Martham – The Green, 01493 740230 and Repps Road, 01493 740190
www.marthamdistrictac.weebly.com
- Potter Heigham – south-east (Martham) bank, upstream of the New Bridge – 10 platforms D2

Trinity Broads

- Filby Broad – on one boardwalk E3
- Rollesby Broad E3

Accessible days out – on video

Watch our video highlighting some of the more accessible places to visit in the Broads National Park – it's available on YouTube

www.youtube.com/watch?v=4KvfMIZ416g

There are suggestions for boating and land-based things to do, an example of holiday accommodation, tips on where to eat and shopping, and importantly, how to get help and advice. It will probably take some research and planning, but we hope that this video, and information here and on our website, will help you enjoy days out in the Broads.

Improvements at Whitlingham B4 and Horsey E2

Accessibility has recently been improved at Whitlingham Country Park on the edge of Norwich and at the National Trust's site at Horsey in the northern Broads.

The path around the broad at Whitingham has been refurbished to make it fully accessible all the way round. The flint barn toilets now include a changing places toilet, with more space and equipment than a standard accessible toilet.

www.whitlinghamcountrypark.com

At Horsey, the full length of the path running from the car park along the dyke to Horsey Windpump, then on to the viewpoint over beautiful Horsey Mere, has been widened and resurfaced to make it fully accessible for wheelchair users and pushchairs all year round, with improved drainage. This was a joint project carried out with the Broads Authority.

01263 740241

www.nationaltrust.org.uk

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/access

It's greener by rail

The Bittern, Wherry and East Suffolk Lines are a great way to explore the Broads, with lots of opportunities to combine train travel with walking, especially on the wonderful expanses of Halvergate grazing marshes. You can really see how the landscape changes as you travel and if time is short, you can see a lot of the Broads even on a day trip.

The www.bitternline.com, www.wherrylines.com and www.eastsuffolklines.co.uk have lots of walks and places to visit from stations (some may require a walk to reach them), with links to www.greateranglia.co.uk for timetables and tickets. Please check timetables very carefully, as service times vary throughout the day and may change. Fares may also change.

The Bittern Line goes north from Norwich to Sheringham on the North Norfolk coast, passing through the northern Broads, while the Wherry Lines go east and south, one branch to Great Yarmouth and the other to Lowestoft, from where the East Suffolk Line continues to Beccles and then further into Suffolk. The map on page 4 of the printed version of Broadcaster shows lines and stations.

Stations for all reasons

Here are some stations and activities to try...

If you want to **go boating by rail**, you're in luck, **Hoveton & Wroxham Station** is in one of the best places in the Broads to set off by boat, whether you want a canoe, a day boat, a passenger boat trip or a solar-powered small boat trip (see page 12). There's so much on offer, the best thing to do is to start by looking at

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/boat-trips

Other stations for boating: Beccles, Brundall

How about visiting a nature reserve only accessible by boat? If you don't mind a walk from the station at Salhouse (about 2.5 miles), **you can hire a canoe** at Salhouse Broad. As well as exploring the broad and the River Bure, you can paddle over to Hoveton Great Broad (part of the Bure Marshes National Nature Reserve) and moor up (free of charge) for a walk round its nature trail. For canoeing info see page 32.

www.salhousebroad.org.uk

www.hovetongreatbroad.org.uk

Other stations for canoeing: Beccles, Hoveton & Wroxham

Use the stations at **Reedham and Berney Arms to discover the Wherryman's Way**, a long-distance walking route. From Reedham you could walk a section of the route there and back to see Polkey's Mill, or do a circular walk around Reedham. From Berney Arms you can explore the Halvergate Mills Trail, see page 71.

www.norfolk.gov.uk/out-and-about-in-norfolk/norfolk-trails

www.norfolk.gov.uk/out-and-about-in-norfolk/windmills

www.watermillsandmarshes.org.uk/trails/halvergate-mills-walk

Other stations for walking: Acle, Beccles, Haddiscoe

If you're **looking for wildlife**, the RSPB nature reserve at **Buckenham Marshes** is right by the station at Buckenham, and their Strumpshaw Fen nature reserve is close to two stations – Buckenham is about a mile away and Brundall is about 1.4 miles away. With a mosaic of wetland habitats, the reserves are great places for birds, such as bitterns, cuckoos and bean geese, as well as other wildlife, including orchids on Strumpshaw's meadows.

www.rspb.org.uk

Other stations for wildlife: Berney Arms (for the RSPB's Berney Marshes and Breydon Water), Oulton Broad North and South (for Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Carlton and Oulton Marshes)

Somerleyton is the station for **bike hire** (see page 27) and **gardens**, with Somerleyton Hall Gardens about 1.4 miles away.

www.somerleyton.co.uk

For **swimming**, **Beccles** has a lido, open all year for outdoor swimming (heated in summer). www.beccleslido.com

From the Broads you can enjoy the **coast** as well as the countryside, with stations at Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft, which both offer sandy beaches and a traditional, fun seaside experience.

www.visitgreatyarmouth.co.uk

www.visitsuffolk.com/destination/lowestoft

If you like **historic buildings, museums and galleries**, **Norwich** should be just the place for you. There are two cathedrals, Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery (see page 65), the Museum of Norwich and many historic streets to explore. And if you love **shopping**, the outdoor **market** (open six days a week) and the lanes and alleys leading off it will give you plenty to enjoy. The station is opposite the River Wensum and close to the Riverside Walk, from where you can walk up to the city centre through the cathedral grounds. For **eating out** there must be something for nearly everyone too, from street food in the market to fine dining in a fine city.

www.visitnorwich.co.uk

Other stations for these activities: Beccles, Great Yarmouth

For public transport details, see page 80.

Pedal power

With beautiful countryside, gentle slopes, quiet lanes and bike hire centres, the Broads is perfect for cycling.

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/cycling

Most bike hire centres are open from Easter or April to October.

Tandems and electric bikes may be available, and centres may supply

maps, or you can download cycle routes from
www.thebroadsbybike.org.uk

Cycle hire

Clippesby Hall 01493 367800 www.clippesbyhall.com D3

Coltishall – Bure Valley Cycle Hire, Bure Valley Railway Station
07824 992513 www.burevalleycyclehire.co.uk B2

Horning – Broadland Cycle Hire at BeWILDerwood, delivery service,
07747 483154 www.norfolkbroadscycling.co.uk C2

Somerleyton Cycles, lifts from moorings and rail station,
01502 732004 www.somerleytoncycles.com E6

Bure Valley Railway and Path B2

The narrow-gauge Bure Valley Railway runs from Wroxham to Aylsham. The path for cyclists and walkers follows the same route, and the train can sometimes carry bikes. The path is about 9 miles. If you're starting from the bike hire centre at Horning, a route along country lanes will take you to the path. If you're taking the train to Wroxham, you'll find lots of boating opportunities to enjoy the Broads from the water too. The railway is accessible by wheelchair, please book in advance.

01263 733858 www.bvrw.co.uk

Whitlingham Country Park, Trowse B4

The path around the broad makes a lovely short bike ride. Coming from Norwich city centre, National Cycle Network Route 1 runs through the park.

www.whitlinghamcountrypark.com

www.sustrans.org.uk/national-cycle-network

Tour de Broads

The event takes place on Sunday 11 August, location: Octagon Park, Little Plumstead

www.thepedalrevolution.co.uk

...and horse power

Another great way to take in the big skies and panoramic views of the Broads is on horseback, with riding available for beginners and beyond. Some places also offer riding for people with disabilities.

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/horse-riding

Ferries and wherries

Ferries and other small boats, and large wherries are part of the history of the Broads – they were essential for getting people and goods around.

Small boat trips

Beccles – trips along the River Waveney between Beccles Lido and the Locks Inn, Geldeston

07561 607263 www.bigdogferry.co.uk D7

Hickling Broad – wildlife boat trips 01692 598276

www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk D2

Hoveton/Wroxham – Ra – see page 12 B2

How Hill, Ludham – Electric Eel – see page 14 C2

Martham – see page 21 E2

Ranworth – Liana – see page 13 C3

Ranworth Broad – ferry and wildlife boat trips 01603 270479

www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk C3

Rollesby Broad – trips from The Waterside 01493 740531

www.thewatersiderollesby.co.uk E3

South Walsham – see page 22 C3

Stalham – trips on a Victorian steam launch 01692 581681

www.museumofthebroads.org.uk C1 and see page 22

Ferries

Burgh St Peter – ferry across the River Waveney from Waveney River Centre to Carlton Marshes 01502 677343 (enquiries) or

07500 571232 (on demand service)

www.carltoncolvilletowncouncil.gov.uk E6

Reedham – vehicle chain ferry across the River Yare to Loddon and Chedgrave area

01493 700429 www.reedhamferry.co.uk D5

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/boat-trips

Wherries – big boat trips

What about setting sail on a wherry trip (or just visiting)? Wherries were the traditional cargo boats on the Broads, and later pleasure wherries and wherry yachts were built.

Norfolk Wherry Trust and Wherry Maud Trust

The only two trading wherries left are Albion (1898) and Maud (1899). The Norfolk Wherry Trust offers public day trips and charters (hires) on Albion, plus open days around the Broads when you are welcome on board for a look round. Wherry Maud Trust offers day and short sailings (you need to become a trust member to join these), open days and many other events for all.

www.wherryalbion.com

www.wherrymaudtrust.org

Wherry Yacht Charter Charitable Trust

This is a fleet of two pleasure wherries, Hathor (1905) and Ardea (1927), and three wherry yachts, Olive (1909), Norada (1912) and White Moth (1915). The wherries can be chartered (hired) for a day, a weekend or a longer visit. There's also a programme of scheduled public sailings where you can join a half-day or day trip. Hathor will be based at How Hill Staithe (C2) from May to September and except when sailing will usually be on view, when you're welcome on board for a look round. We suggest you check in advance if you want to be sure of visiting Hathor.

01603 781475 www.wherryyachtcharter.org

Electric boating

Hiring a day boat, for an hour, a few hours or all day, is a fun way to get out on the water, and if you're thinking about a boating holiday, it's a good way to get the feel for it. Day boats are for hire throughout the Broads and many are electric – better for the environment, with a smaller carbon footprint, and quieter, so more relaxing, and you can get closer to the wildlife. Please wear the life jackets provided. On a day boat there's no need for recharging. For longer trips with a hire cruiser you can top up your fuel by plugging in overnight at our network of charging points around the Broads. The small but growing fleet of hybrid cruisers available on the Broads can also use these points. If you can, think about how you get to the Broads, too. For example, taking the train (instead of driving) from Norwich to Wroxham to hire a day boat cuts the CO₂ produced during the journey by 80%.

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/things-to-do/boating/boathire

The network of points will be expanding and we are working with partners to support the development of fully electric hire cruisers for holidays. We will also be working with private boat owners to enable

them to move to greener fuels.

www.broads-authority.gov.uk/looking-after

Welcome aboard your paddlecraft

Paddlesports are a great way to discover this fragile wetland and get closer to the wildlife, and canoeing on the Broads is suitable for all the family. Whether you're hiring or have your own craft, please put safety first – always.

Take care everyone!

- All canoeists should wear a buoyancy aid
- All paddleboarders should wear a buoyancy aid and a safety tether
- Paddleboarders, please be aware that you are especially vulnerable to winds, currents and tides. You are also more likely to fall into the water.
- Don't deliberately capsize
- Stick to the right-hand side of the waterway unless it's unsafe to do so
- Read the Boating Basics guide in Broadcaster, see page 45, for advice relevant to all. It includes a map on the centre pages. Wherever you are on the Broads, you must take account of local conditions at the time and put safety first.
- Watch our Boating Essentials video guide to paddlesports www.broads-authority.gov.uk/boating-essentials
- For one-hour, three-hour and six-hour return trails go to www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/canoe-hire

- Paddle UK (formerly British Canoeing) also has routes, together with lots of other interesting and useful info and advice for all types of paddlecraft, on www.gopaddling.info
- We recommend all paddlecraft keep off the lower reaches of the rivers (which have stronger currents and tides, and more powered boats). The lower reaches are the stretches of river approaching the sea at Great Yarmouth, so, beyond Acle Bridge on the Bure, beyond Reedham Bridge on the Yare and beyond the Broads Authority moorings at Somerleyton on the Waveney. If you do canoe downstream beyond these places, you need to be extremely experienced, fit and able.
- Paddlesports allow exploration of the headwaters (less tidal waters). Please respect nature reserves and private land, as most smaller channels leading off from the rivers and broads do not have a public right of access. In the spring and summer, please paddle away from the edges of waterways to minimise disturbance to breeding birds.
- During warmer spells you may see a blue-green coloured scum on the water. This can indicate the presence of toxic bacteria. Don't paddle in areas where the scum is present and avoid coming into contact with it or ingesting it, as it can lead to unpleasant symptoms and diseases. One waterborne disease to be aware of is leptospirosis (Weil's disease). You can reduce the chance of becoming ill by covering open wounds, avoiding swallowing the water, washing your hands before eating or drinking and showering after paddlesports. If you start to feel unwell after taking part in paddlesports, please seek urgent medical advice.

Hire centres

- For canoe hire centres (mostly open from Easter or April to October) go to www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/canoe-hire
- Canadian canoes usually carry two or three adults, but please check with the centre, where they will also advise you on routes
- Some centres offer paddleboards and other paddlecraft, plus related activities and facilities
- All centres are monitored for safety by the Broads Authority as part of the licensing agreement

If you have your own paddlecraft

These points apply to all canoes, kayaks and paddleboards (including inflatables) that are used on the Broads.

- You must have an annual or short visit licence for your paddlecraft. For details go to www.broads-authority.gov.uk/tolls. Alternatively, if you are a member of Paddle UK (formerly British Canoeing), you can paddle for free on the Broads and other UK waterways, provided you have your membership card with you. www.paddleuk.org.uk
- Follow the canoe manufacturer's guidance on carrying capacity
- Take a phone in a waterproof case with you for emergencies
- For launching points and slipways go to www.broads-authority.gov.uk/slipways
- In the south, one of the quieter stretches is the River Waveney between Beccles and Bungay. No motorboats can

use the river between Geldeston Lock and Bungay, and there's a canoe pontoon for launching and getting off at the lock (no charge).

- In the north, quieter places are Salhouse Broad (small charge for launching) and the River Ant between Dilham and Sutton (charges to launch at Smallburgh Staithe and Wayford Bridge, free launch point at Sutton Staithe). Please note that the Trinity Broads is a Norfolk Wildlife Trust nature reserve with no public right of access to the water, including for non-powered craft.
- Be aware of biosecurity and help stop the spread of invasive species. Check out the Check Clean Dry campaign for more information.
www.nonnativespecies.org/what-can-i-do/check-clean-dry
- Before you set off, tell someone where you're going and how long you plan to be out. Let them know when you get back.

For more about paddlesports go to
www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/canoe-hire

Wild swimming

The Broads Authority does not recommend swimming in the Broads, except as part of an organised event.

For more information please go to
www.broads-authority.gov.uk/boating/navigating-the-broads/outdoor-swimming

Have a go...setting sail

A day out or a visit to the Broads is the perfect opportunity to have a go at sailing, with training centres and sailing clubs who are keen to welcome you and do their best to make it all plain sailing...

The RYA (Royal Yachting Association) also has lots of information about taster sessions, courses and clubs to help you get started with sailing and windsurfing. More details from 023 8060 4100 or www.rya.org.uk

Barton Turf Adventure Centre 01692 536411
www.btac-services.co.uk C2

Green Wyvern Yachting Club RYA Training Centre
www.greenwyvern.org.uk

Horning RYA Training Centre 01692 630507
www.horning-sailing.club C3

Hunter's Yard RYA Training Centre, Ludham 01692 678263
www.huntersyard.co.uk D2

Nancy Oldfield Trust – see page 21 C2

**Norfolk Broads School of Sailing RYA Training Centre, Eastwood
Whelpton, Upton** 01493 750430 www.eastwood-whelpton.co.uk D3

Norfolk Broads Yacht Club, Wroxham 01603 782808
www.nbyc.co.uk B3

Norfolk Punt Club RYA Training Centre, Barton Turf
www.puntclub.co.uk C2

Norfolk Schools Sailing Association, Filby www.nssa.co.uk E3

Oulton Broad Water Sports Centre 01502 558487
www.oultombroadwatersportscentre.co.uk F7

Waveney Sailability – see page 21 E7

Whitlingham Adventure, Norwich 01603 632307
www.whitlinghamadventure.org.uk B4

Taster sessions, courses, craft hire, group activities, outdoor learning and clubs – activities include sailing, windsurfing, canoeing, kayaking, paddleboarding, raft building, climbing, archery, and bushcraft and survival

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/sailing

Love the Broads

The beautiful and diverse Broads National Park offers so much to see and do for everyone.

But this magical place needs everyone's support to safeguard its future for generations to come. The Broads Trust is a local charity that aims to do just that, by welcoming donations from visitors, local people and businesses through its fund-raising scheme, Love the Broads.

So far, Love the Broads has given over £100,000 in grants to 54 amazing projects that benefit the landscape and wildlife of the Broads, and help school groups and other visitors to enjoy and understand the special Broads environment. You can find all the projects that have been helped thanks to donations raised at www.lovethebroads.org.uk

The trust's latest project is a network of Discovery Hub information and adventure points, to help visitors discover the landscape, wildlife and history of the Broads, exploring on foot, by bike and by boat. The first three hubs have opened at Salhouse Broad (B3), Beccles Quay (D7) and South Beach Parade, Great Yarmouth (F4). The Salhouse hub includes a stargazing net where you can lie back and discover the dark skies and bright stars over the Broads.

Please support the Broads Trust – you'll be helping to keep the Broads special. There are many ways that you can give a little back and make a real difference to the Broads. You can donate at

justgiving.com/nsbct, or become a member or consider leaving a legacy to fund a significant project – contact info@lovethebroads.org.uk

Charity number 1124552

A fishy business

I'm not a fisherman, but if you're interested in the wildlife and history of the Broads, you'll soon see that fish are a vital part of the food chain, for people of the past, as well as other wildlife. And in the period 1800-1914 you might say, it all comes to a head...

Fishing as a livelihood

In 1877, as part of an enquiry, Frank Buckland, the Inspector of Fisheries wrote: "The rivers and Broads are admirably adapted for the breeding and fattening of such indigenous fish as belong to the species of carps, breams, perches, and so forth... [which] naturally deposit, or rather suspend, their spawn on waterweeds and other aquatic plants. The borders of the Broads are, for the most part, margined with dense jungles of reeds, while at the same time the bottom is planted with forests of sub-aqueous vegetation; so there are many hundreds of miles of spawning ground available for the fish which live in these waters."

In other words, the Broads was pretty much an ideal breeding ground for coarse fish and therefore for coarse fishing. But anyone who had a connection with Broads fish pretty much knew this already. Before the existence of any written records, people had always fished the inland waters of the Broads. The fishponds at the medieval St Benet's Abbey (see page 66) were an important food source for the monks. As with birds, the relationship with fish revolved around commercial exploitation as undertaken by fishermen and collecting, as undertaken by sportsmen and some women, anglers.

Up until the middle of the nineteenth century, most fishing undertaken in the Broads was commercial and done using nets. The main net employed was the drag net. This, as its name suggests, was dragged through the river, indiscriminately taking all species, though specialist fishermen used specialist nets. Fish were caught largely for food and bait. The most important of the food fish were the migratory fish, the smelts and eels, which could be caught quickly in large numbers when they migrated. The main value of bream and roach was as bait for the crab and lobster pots of the North Sea fishermen. In the early 19th century, carts were sent to Barton Broad by the coastal fishermen to buy all the bream and roach taken when the broad was being dragged. The Breydon flounders usually ended up as bait in lobster pots too.

Smelts

They live in inshore coastal waters, so Breydon Water was ideal for them and though small, they were numerous. They also migrated annually through the Broads to spawn on the river gravels in Norwich, where they were caught with cast nets. A smelt fisherman could catch up to 600 per night. Traditionally, they were fried in breadcrumbs, with two or three for each person. They had to be very fresh and once caught were kept alive in a tank of water, like eels.

Eels

During this period it was realised that eels spawned at sea and migrated up the rivers. Many people didn't believe this though, instead believing that they were born as fully formed young in Breydon Water and Lake Lothing. Eels have attracted many other strange beliefs. There was an old tale that when on migration, eels knotted themselves into a ball and rolled along the riverbed. An eel-skin garter was believed to ward off rheumatism. And eels kept in

water-filled trunks when taken for sale were thought to be at risk of being killed by the electrical disturbances during a thunderstorm.

There were many different ways of catching them, including using 'picks', 'liggers', 'grigs' and 'babs'. But the most productive way was using a sett. These were huge nets, stretched across the river at night. If you go up Candle Dyke towards Hickling, on your left you'll pass the last Broads eel sett, a little hut on the bank from where the eel catcher would operate. You can listen to Derek Johnson, the last eel catcher in the Broads, on the Broads Authority website.

www.broads-authority.gov.uk/about-the-broads/heritage-and-culture

Eels were stewed, or boiled and then fried. Eels caught in brackish (slightly salty) water were thought to taste better, though this may just have been a marketing ploy by the Breydon fishermen!

Pike

These were regarded as a challenge and therefore an achievement to catch. There were various methods, including what were termed 'less gentlemanly' ones. When cooked, they would usually have their tail fixed in their mouth, but this may just have been so they could fit in the oven – they weighed in at around 10 pounds.

Perch

This was another sought-after food fish. They were considered to tolerate brackish waters more than other fish, so shrimps were often used as bait. They were thought to congregate round the many bridges in the Broads.

Tench

Bow nets or your bare hands were used for catching these. They were considered good enough for the table and were sometimes

taken to market wrapped in wet moss to keep them alive – and fresh.

Roach and bream

These were scorned as food. If a marshman out fishing for his family caught bream or roach he would usually feed them to his dog or pig.

Other fish to fry (or maybe not!)

Lamprey (similar to eel) were once commonly eaten, sturgeon were occasional visitors, allis shad or Alice Shad as they were known at the time (a sea fish) and burbot, now extinct in the UK, were also found. Even trout and salmon were found on the River Wensum.

Laying down the law

There were laws controlling netting and fishing on the rivers and broads. These set out close seasons and mesh sizes for nets, enforced with proclamations and investigations, but an 1812 article in The Norfolk Chronicle suggests that the inquests had become more of a day out for officials than a serious legal business.

Unfortunately, in the case of the Yare, for example, the laws dated back as far as the 15th century and so were largely either forgotten or ignored. For many years, nobody seemed to mind or notice, and in fact the broads and rivers were actually regarded as overstocked. However, this abundance of coarse fish, particularly bream, was about to come under threat.

Revolutions and poachers

The ultimate cause was the Agricultural and Industrial Revolutions suddenly producing a huge market for fish. Smelts for example, were extremely profitable. In the early 1800s, a smelt fisherman could earn £23 in a season. Not surprisingly, the amount of drag netting in particular increased dramatically, with worrying consequences. Growing populations in industrial towns needed feeding and tons of fish were sent to the Midlands during the spawning or any other

season. Fishermen, using large, small-meshed drag nets, and usually operating at night, would take wagon loads and wherry loads of fish during the spawning season, and they began to be called poachers. Even the sea fishermen got in on the act, sending sea-going smacks to trawl the river for freshwater fish for use as bait. Broads fish, especially the fry, important for future stocks, were even being caught and sold for use as fertiliser on the new intensifying enclosed farms. Such over-fishing, especially during the spawning season, was unsustainable and from the early 19th century there was an increasing group of sportsmen and women who began to make their voices heard – the anglers.

A new angle on fishing

Angling, or fishing using an angled hook, had been around for centuries. Indeed the first known treatise on angling dates to 1496. But in March 1839, Norwich Town Council was faced with a petition requesting that action should be taken to prevent the dragging of the river for fish. The petition was referred upwards to the magistrates, who were requested to prohibit illegal fishing. This appears to be the first mention of anglers as a recognised group in the Broads.

Around this time, angling technology was improving. The reel was relatively new and the technique of casting was just being developed. Lightweight bamboo rods appeared and silk lines replaced the old horsehair kind. Angling was becoming increasingly popular and skilful, and people began to travel from London to the Broads, specifically for angling. In 1857 the anglers formed the Norwich and Norfolk Anglers Society to promote their recreation and in August 1859 the first recorded county fishing match was held at Limpenhoe Reach on the River Yare. Over eight hours, 28 competitors caught 231 pounds of fish. The Yare Preservation Society

was also formed in 1857 and eventually became instrumental in bringing about reform.

The anglers society also aimed to assist the authorities in clamping down on illegal fishing, but in this they were less successful. For the time being, all they could do was to bribe fishermen not to net. The complicated situation needed new legislation and in 1876, the Yare Preservation Society, with a clear aim 'to abolish netting and poaching, and protect the river for fair angling' teamed up with riverside landowners and MPs, and decided to bypass the local authorities altogether, going direct to the Home Secretary, which eventually led to the 1877 Norfolk and Suffolk Fisheries Act.

The situation improved but was far from perfect for everyone. Those revolutions were still having an effect. Sea breaches, pleasure steamers and fen drainage amongst other things were all thought to be affecting fishing and angling. In the early 1800s, the River Wensum, running through the centre of Norwich, was clean enough for trout to congregate at New Mills, now the end of the Broads navigation. However, the population of Norwich was growing and by the middle of the century, the most serious threat to fishing and angling on the Wensum was pollution.

Modern times

Clearly, many Broads people of the period were just as concerned with matters relating to water quality, bank protection, salt water and water levels as we are today. Some local buildings still have plaques indicating the water level in the 1912 floods.

Accommodating all those with an interest in the Broads is also a recurrent theme. But commercial fishing has disappeared from the Broads and culinary tastes definitely have changed; coarse freshwater fish are no longer widely eaten in the UK. If you are considering keeping any fish you catch anywhere, please follow local

rules and guidance on size, catch limits, equipment and safety. We don't recommend eating fish caught in the Broads waterways.

In the interests of brevity I haven't included information on sources here, but much has been gleaned from The Norfolk Chronicle (published 1776-1955) and I'll be delighted to supply details of sources if anyone would like to know more.

For more about angling see pages 22 and below (44), and www.gov.uk/guidance/regional-rod-fishing-byelaws-anglian-region

For where to see wildlife go to www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/nature-reserves

If you're interested in the links between the Broads and coastal fishing, Time and Tide at Great Yarmouth is a great place to visit. www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/time-tide

Robin Jeffries
Visitor Services Officer

Try angling

The Broads is a great place to try angling and the Angling Trust anglingtrust.net has lots of information to help you get started.

The coarse fishing season runs from 16 June to 14 March every year and you must have a current Environment Agency licence, available from gov.uk/fishing-licences. Bream, perch, pike, roach, rudd, tench and eel are the likely catch. You'll find many local fishing tackle shops and if you're a beginner they'll be happy to advise you. Take unwanted tackle home. Discarding it can cause problems for wildlife. For disposal facilities go to www.broads-authority.gov.uk/waste

You can fish from the bank or from platforms, or you can hire a boat. Some boatyards hire day boats specifically for fishing and you're

allowed to fish in most of the Broads waterways provided there is public access. Boats must not be under power while you are fishing. Angling is allowed from most Broads Authority 24-hour moorings (see the map on the centre pages of the printed version of Broadcaster) but please make way for boaters and canoeists if you're at a mooring. For accessible fishing locations suitable for wheelchair users see page 22, and to find out about the history of fishing in the Broads, see page 38.

For more angling details go to our websites:

www.broads-authority.gov.uk/angling (includes map)

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/angling

Boating Basics

Welcome to our Yacht Stations

The quay assistants at our yacht stations are happy to help with all your boating questions, and to give advice about places to visit and things to do. The yacht stations aren't just for boaters – land-based visitors are very welcome too!

Great Yarmouth (F4)

Tar Works Road, NR30 1QR 01493 842794 / 07766 398238

yarmouthyachtstation@broads-authority.gov.uk

- Staffed from 23 March to 3 November, 8am-8pm (or dusk if earlier)
- Water, toilets and showers
- About 60 moorings (depending on boat sizes)
- Mooring charges - £8 during the day (until 6pm), and £16 for combined daytime and overnight (until 10am) or overnight only (until 10am)

Reedham (D5)

Reedham Quay, NR13 3TE 01493 701867 / 07733 102566

reedhamquay@broads-authority.gov.uk

- Staffed from 23 March to 3 November, 9am-6pm
- Water
- About 24 free 24-hour moorings (depending on boat sizes)
- We intend to introduce mooring charges at this site this year

Norwich (A4)

Riverside Road, NR1 1SQ 01603 612980 / 07747 065378

norwichyachtstation@broads-authority.gov.uk

- Staffed from 23 March to 3 November, 8am-8pm (or dusk if earlier)
- Water, toilets and showers
- Pump-out service from £15
- About 30 moorings (depending on boat sizes), starting on the far side of Foundry Bridge as you approach from Great Yarmouth (there are no other public moorings in Norwich)
- Mooring charges - £8 during the day (until 6pm), and £16 for combined daytime and overnight (until 10am) or overnight only (until 10am)

Ranworth (C3)

The Staithe, NR13 6HY, 01603 756094

ranworthtic@broads-authority.gov.uk

- Staffed from 23 March to 3 November during information centre opening times (see page 14)

- Water
- 24-hour moorings, about 22 (depending on boat sizes)
- Mooring charges - £5 during the day (until 5pm), and £10 for combined daytime and overnight (until 10am) or overnight only (until 10am)
- Day boats - £3 to use dinghy dyke
- Please pay in the information centre

There are also yacht stations at Beccles, D7, 01502 712225 / 07938 845744, www.becclestowncouncil.gov.uk, Beccles Town Council and Oulton Broad, F7, 01502 574946, www.yachtstation.co.uk, East Suffolk Council on the River Waveney.

Top 10 Boating Tips...

Stay safe – follow the advice from the Broads rangers, who work on the Broads all year round. Adam Hick is part of our River Waveney team of rangers, who look after a large part of the southern Broads.

1. Before you go...

Read your skipper's manual – if you're on a holiday cruiser, your boatyard should supply one on board.

- Our 'essential guide' boating videos have lots of practical boat handling and navigation advice for all www.broads-authority.gov.uk/boating-essentials. The videos cover Preparing for Your Holiday, Staying Safe, Mooring Up, Ropes and Knots, Man Overboard, Navigating Bridges, Crossing Breydon Water, Paddlesports, and Dealing with Accidents. The boating section of our website also has all you need to know about boating, including tide tables.

- Navigation maps (published by Heron Maps) and Broads tide tables are on sale at our information centres and yacht stations.
- You can get boating advice from your boatyard, yacht stations or by calling the Broads Authority's Broads Control, staffed daily 9am-5pm (6pm from April to October), on 01603 756056. The rangers, who you'll see out and about, are always happy to help too.

2. Wear it

Always wear your life jacket when you are on deck, getting on and off or tying up your boat – even if you can swim. Step ashore, never jump, and wear shoes with a good grip.

- Children should wear life jackets even when your boat is moored.
- A life jacket will help you float. Try to relax and float on your back before trying to get out.
- Don't forget to put a life jacket on your dog, too. Dogs are just as susceptible to cold water and other hazards as people. You can buy dog life jackets from boating suppliers and some hire boatyards provide or rent them for customers' pets. Never enter the water to rescue a pet – you are putting your own life at risk. See page 78 for more about visiting with your dog.

3. Plan ahead

Plan your journey before setting out.

- Keep a note of the important points for your journey. Water is always moving and your boat may be affected by wind and tides. Check the weather, the day's tides for where you're going, and sunrise and sunset times – that's what we do. Hire

boats are not allowed to navigate before sunrise or after sunset as they have no navigation lights.

- Always keep track of where you are on the waterways and make sure others on board know where you are too. They also need to know what to do in case of an emergency.
- Keep a phone charged.

4. Be vigilant

Keep an eye on everyone on board at all times (especially small children).

- Don't let children sit on the front of a boat, or play at the back or on the roof unsupervised, especially when a boat is under way.
- Never allow anyone to travel in any kind of boat or inflatable that your boat is towing.
- Drive on the right-hand side, about 2m or 6' away from the bank.
- Hold on to your boat when moving around it.
- Look out for paddle craft, rowing boats and swimmers in organised events. Reduce speed and allow them plenty of space.
- Keep out of the way of sailing boats – slow down and if you need to, pass behind, never in front.
- Keep away from maintenance boats and other large vessels.
- Keep out of the way of water skiers and other fast boats on the rivers Waveney and Yare and on Breydon Water.

5. Mooring must-dos

Always have your ropes ready and drive into the flow of the water when mooring.

- Don't jump – always step aboard and ashore carefully. Beware of hazards on the quay such as ropes, posts and wet or other slippery surfaces. Everyone involved should always keep a good handhold during casting off and mooring, and don't use arms or legs to stop your boat hitting the quay or another boat. Make sure ropes are ready and that everyone knows what to do. Everyone not involved should stay off deck.
- Always approach a mooring against the tide or flow of the river, with a careful hand on the throttle. You'll then be able to hold the boat stationary heading into the tide and approach the mooring sideways under control. If necessary, go past the mooring and turn the boat around so you can approach against the flow. If you approach the mooring with the tide or flow of the river you will have little or no control at low speeds.
- The fittest adult should step ashore once the boat has stopped. Tie the front rope first. We recommend that you moor at signed moorings only. Other areas are not maintained and there may be no posts. Never moor under bridges. Make sure that your boat is securely tied up. Take a torch and spare batteries if you will be returning to your boat after dark.

6. Keep your head down

Mind your head at all bridges.

- Think ahead for bridges. Tides go up and down so be very careful. Check how high your boat is with the canopy down. Check the clearance boards that tell you the height above water under the bridge.
- Take down your canopy and windshield, get everyone off deck and make sure that all hands, feet and heads are inside the boat. Make sure you have the boat well under control before the bridge, especially if there's a strong current.
- Watch carefully for signs of other boats coming through – usually the boat travelling with the current has right of way as it's more difficult for it to manoeuvre. Never stop or moor under bridges.
- Keep hands, feet and heads inside the boat until you are well clear of the bridge, and if things go wrong, don't try to fend off using your hands or feet.

7. Stay aboard

Don't swim in the rivers and broads.

- You'll never see a ranger swimming – it's too dangerous, no matter how hot the weather is or how good a swimmer you are. There are currents and obstructions and cold water can be dangerous.
- If someone falls in, throw them a lifebuoy and pull them to a bank or ladder. If you have to bring someone up on to your boat from the water, make sure the engine is switched off as they get close. Never reverse towards them and keep them clear of the back of the boat – this where the sharp propeller blades are. Never put yourself in danger by entering the water.

8. Bon appetit

Take care with barbecues, in permitted areas.

- Never light or use barbecues on deck or anywhere else on your boat, or on wooden moorings.

9. Keep your wits about you

Don't drink and drive on the water.

- We recommend that people driving and sailing boats don't drink alcohol until their boats are moored for the night.

10. Slow down and relax

Stick to speed limits and check your wash (the waves made by your boat).

- Always look behind your boat – there should be no big waves (they damage banks, disturb wildlife, rock moored boats and can even capsize small craft).

Web boating

- www.broads-authority.gov.uk/boating
- www.broads-authority.gov.uk/yacht-stations
- www.broads-authority.gov.uk/boating-essentials
- www.broads-authority.gov.uk/safety
- www.broads-authority.gov.uk/bridges
- www.broads-authority.gov.uk/boating-news
- www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk – with Digital Pocket Guide app
- www.what3words.com – app to help the emergency services find you

Bridges

- Remember that bridge clearances given in our table (in the printed version of Broadcaster) are averages, based on normal tides. But tidal levels can vary considerably and so affect the figures.
- At railway swing bridges a single red flag indicates bridge in service/operable. Two red flags indicate bridge out of service/inoperable. Take note of the electronic signage at each bridge. If you are unable to pass under due to water levels, approach the bridge, give three blasts on the horn and follow the instructions on the illuminated signs on the bridge. If you have a radio, Reedham, Trowse and Somerleyton rail bridges monitor VHF Channel 12. In hot weather, you may like to check ahead to see if Somerleyton Bridge is working as temperature can affect the mechanism.
- At Potter Heigham all hire cruisers must use the bridge pilot from Phoenix Fleet boatyard and private boats are advised to do so. The pilot service is available daily 9am-5pm from Easter to October, depending on tide and weather conditions, 01692 670460 (Phoenix Fleet boatyard). The cost for hire boats is £10-15 return and for private boats £20-30 return.
- At Wroxham there are two bridges close together. Hire cruisers must use the bridge pilot.

Emergency

- Call 999 or 112 from any type of phone for coastguard, fire, police or ambulance services.

- Ask for the coastguard if you are on or next to the water – they're not just for the sea. They will call the other services if needed.
- Tell the emergency services or your boatyard where you are. Always keep track of where you are when boating.
- If you are on a holiday boat the contact details for your boatyard are in the back of your skipper's manual.
- The Broads Authority 24-hour moorings have name plates with Ordnance Survey grid references and postcodes on them. If you are near one, give these details to the emergency services or your boatyard so they know where you are.
- Keep your mobile phone charged.
- For other important numbers see the telephone directory on page 82.
- Defibrillators are available at some boatyards and villages (usually near a pub, shop or village hall). They are also available at Broads Authority information centres and yacht stations, and at Yare House, Norwich NR1 1RY (all only when staffed).

How to cross Breydon Water

Breydon Water, on the edge of Great Yarmouth, is an internationally important site for water birds. A cruise across it takes you to and fro between the northern and southern rivers. It can be challenging, so you need to prepare and take care.

Follow our guidance here for a safe crossing.

1. Think about your journey well ahead. You can contact our staff at Great Yarmouth Yacht Station on 01493 842794 or 07766 398238 (see page 45). They'll work out the best time for you to

cross and give guidance. If anything's not clear to you, ask again. Leave a message if necessary (with your telephone number) and they will get back to you.

2. Plan your crossing so that you can go under Great Yarmouth bridges at slack water, which is about an hour after low water. The tide will be less of a hazard and you'll have maximum clearance under the bridges. Larger vessels (with an air draft over 2.32m or 7'6") may need to cross at low water rather than waiting for slack water – please contact Great Yarmouth Yacht Station for advice. The tide tables in the printed version of Broadcaster give the times of low water. Crossing at other times is inadvisable. There are two bridges close together. The old metal railway bridge, Vauxhall Bridge, is 7.62cm (3") lower than the concrete road bridge, Yarmouth/Acle Road Bridge. You should be passing under bridges with at least 30cm (a foot) to spare.
3. Work out the time you need to leave your previous mooring by working backwards from the time you need to be in Great Yarmouth. It will take about 2¼ hours to get to Great Yarmouth from Acle and about 2 hours from Reedham or St Olaves. Make sure that you won't be navigating in the dark – hire boats are not allowed to navigate before sunrise or after sunset as they have no navigation lights. Check the weather forecast – don't cross if visibility is poor or there are strong winds.
4. Always wear life jackets when on deck. Have your canopy or mast lowered ready for passing under the bridges. Before going under any bridge check your boat height (shown on a plate in the cockpit or in the skipper's manual). Check the bridge clearance boards to make sure that your boat will fit under the

bridges. Don't steer your boat from the outside steering position – if something goes wrong you are vulnerable.

5. Make sure you know what to do. Keep everyone inside the boat or cockpit during the crossing. Concentrate on what you are doing. The channel has some bends in it, but don't take shortcuts. Never go outside the red and green navigation posts. If you get stuck, try and reverse. If that doesn't work, call your boatyard.

Info file

More details on all these points from our yacht stations and information centres

Moorings

- For Broads Authority 24-hour free moorings see the map on the centre pages in the printed version of Broadcaster
- Broads Hire Boat Federation (BHBF) operators allow other member companies' boats to moor in their boatyards free of charge, subject to availability; look out for the BHBF logo at boatyards or check your skipper's manual
- Many other places also provide moorings

Tides

- All Broads rivers are close to the sea so are all affected by tides (or are tidal)
- Consideration of tidal flow may be important as journeys by boat are harder and slower when the flow is against you
- Rise and fall of the tide is on average about 2.2m/7' at Great Yarmouth and Reedham, while at Norwich it's about 60-90cm/2'-3' and at Wroxham it's about 15cm/6''

- There are usually two high tides and two low tides each day but times vary daily
- Knowing when high and low tide times occur can be important for getting under bridges, and tides can create strong currents in certain areas
- If you are staying on a holiday boat, your skipper's manual may include tide tables
- At Breydon Water it is essential to pay careful attention to the tide in your planning
- Read the instructions for crossing Breydon Water on page 54

Posts

- Where there are red and green posts, keep in the main channel between them
- Red and green posts and buoys don't mean red for danger and green for go – they mark the edges of channels
- Yellow posts usually mark a hazard – keep well clear and keep to channel

Water

- For water points at Broads Authority moorings see printed map (some are seasonal, such as Gaye's Staithe and West Somerton)
- Water points are available at many other moorings and boatyards (small charge)
- Boil water from all water points before drinking

- Waste water from boats, except sewage, empties into the waterways, so use biodegradable washing-up liquid and other cleaning products, and use only small amounts
- Pump-out services available at many boatyards throughout the Broads
- Absorb oil on to kitchen paper and put paper in bin

Paddlesports

- See page 32

Sailing events

If you find yourself on the water during a regatta:

- Keep close to the right-hand bank and slow down as you pass through
- Sailing boats have right of way
- If they are zigzagging across the river to catch the wind, slow down and try to pass behind them
- Make your course clear – do not weave about
- Watch for indications on when to pass, but do not put yourself or others in danger, or just moor up to watch
- Where channels are provided for safe passage, stay in channel
- Listen to and follow advice from rangers or safety patrol boats

Oulton Broad racing

- Races held Thursday evenings, bank holidays and some Sundays

During powerboat racing:

- Do not enter or leave via main body of broad where event is taking place
- Keep speed down and follow instructions from patrol boats, rescue boats and yacht station staff for safe passage and mooring

North Walsham and Dilham Canal

- For small craft only, charge or donation to North Walsham and Dilham Canal Trust payable for use www.nwdct.org

Peace and quiet

- Be sensitive to your neighbours – don't leave your engine idling late at night or early in the morning
- Be aware of radio and TV volume too, especially when the roof of your boat is open

Tolls

- Boat owners who are already registered with the Broads Authority can renew annual tolls online

Slipways

- There are many slipways and launching points – some free, some with charges
- Many boatyards also have slipways – charges apply

Electric charging point cards

- £1 from Broads National Park information centres and yacht stations at Hoveton, Ranworth, How Hill, Norwich, Reedham and Great Yarmouth, and from some shops and boatyards
- Keep cards away from mobile phones – they can interfere with credit on cards

- See link below for details on where to find electric charging points, how to use them and where to buy cards

Mutford Lock

- Between Oulton Broad and Lake Lothing at Lowestoft – limit of hire boat navigation
- Not for use by hire boats
- For private boats, call 01502 574946 or 01502 531778, 24 hours ahead, to book a passage (£17)

Broads Beat

- Now in their 29th year – a team of Royal Yachting Association-trained police officers and support staff who patrol the Broads throughout the year, preventing and detecting crime, reducing anti-social behaviour and disorder, assisting boaters and ensuring the safety of all on land or water
- Officers work with the other emergency services and partnership agencies, including the Broads Authority, RNLI, Border Force, Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority and Environment Agency
- Broads Beat is supported by many businesses and is the UK's longest-running police and public sponsorship scheme
- Call them on 101 for non-emergencies, or email broadsbeat@norfolk.police.uk
- Follow their daily activities on Twitter/X www.x.com/BroadsBeat

Web info file

- www.broads-authority.gov.uk/moorings

- www.broads-authority.gov.uk/tides
- www.broads-authority.gov.uk/tolls
- www.broads-authority.gov.uk/slipways
- www.broads-authority.gov.uk/charging-points
- www.broads-authority.gov.uk/overseas

Waste disposal

- Recycling and other waste disposal facilities are often available near moorings or in towns and villages
- Be careful with waste – don't leave bags at the back of boats where they could easily fall into the water
- Dispose of waste at proper sites – don't leave bags at sides of moorings or adjacent roads and don't overload bins or leave bags by bins if bins are full
- If necessary, hang on to waste till you reach the next site
- Discarded litter and fishing tackle can entangle and kill wildlife

Boat waste facilities on each river (available at time of compilation)

Wensum/Yare/Chet

Norwich Yacht Station

Brundall: Broom Boats, Silverline Marine (both hire craft only)

Rockland Staithe

Loddon: Staithe, Pye's Mill; Maffett Cruisers, Pacific Cruisers (both hire craft only)

Reedham Quay

Bure

Coltishall: Kings Head

Wroxham/Hoveton: Broads National Park Information Centre;

Barnes Brinkcraft, Norfolk Broads Direct (both hire craft only)

Salhouse Broad

Horning: Ferry Marina (hire craft only); Swan Inn

Ranworth Staithe

Acle: Acle Bridge Moorings (car park); Bridgecraft (hire craft only)

Great Yarmouth Yacht Station

Ant

Stalham: Richardson's (hire craft only)

Sutton Staithe

Barton Turf Staithe car park

Neatishead Staithe

Irstead Staithe

Ludham Bridge Staithe

Thurne

Hickling: Pleasure Boat Inn

Horsey Mill

Repps Staithe

Potter Heigham: Staithe; Herbert Woods (hire craft only)

Ludham: Womack Staithe

Waveney

Geldeston: Locks Inn

Beccles Yacht Station

Burgh St Peter: Waveney River Centre (hire craft only)

Oulton Broad Yacht Station

Somerleyton

Burgh Castle

www.broads-authority.gov.uk/waste

From short strolls to long hikes

The Broads has over 190 miles (300km) of footpaths for you to explore. Whether you're looking for accessible paths, village or town strolls, walks from moorings, walks with a historic site to explore, walks for wildlife (including many on nature reserves), walks for dogs, walks linked to public transport or walks that take in many of these elements and more, you'll find them in the Broads. If you're taking your dog walking, please read the guidance on page 81, where you'll also find public transport info. For guided walks and other outdoor events, go to www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/whats-on

Here's a taste of some walks to get you started. The starting points, Coltishall, Burgh Castle and Beccles, can all be reached by bus, and Beccles also has a rail station. You'll find details of these walks and plenty more in Park Rangers – Favourite Walks, published by Collins, price £6.99. There are short strolls, long hikes and walks somewhere in between, and they will take you to all the seven river valleys of the Broads. The guide is available from the Broads information centres at Hoveton, Ranworth and How Hill, where you'll also find lots of other guides and Ordnance Survey maps to help you.

River Bure

Coltishall and Horstead, about 6.5 miles, B2

A village and river walk in the northern Broads, exploring Coltishall Common, Horstead Mill and the Bure Valley Path.

Wildlife to look out for: geese, ducks, grey wagtails, yellowhammers, jays – even a barn owl or a kingfisher; listen out for skylarks too

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/walking

River Waveney

Burgh Castle, about 1.4 miles, wheelchair access around the fortifications, E5

Explore the remains of this Roman fort in the heart of the Broads and enjoy the spectacular view across the marshes to Berney Arms Mill. There are options to extend the walk if you wish.

Wildlife to look out for: bearded tits, reed and sedge warblers, water rails, yellow wagtails, wildfowl and waders, marsh and hen harriers
www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/walking

River Waveney

Beccles and Geldeston, about 7 miles, D7

This is a circular Norfolk and Suffolk walk in the southern Broads – the north bank of the Waveney is in Norfolk, while the southern part of the walk is in Suffolk, on the Angles Way. The walk is number 3 in the series of Angles Way circular walks on the Norfolk trails website.

Wildlife to look out for: owls, marsh harriers, deer, otters
www.norfolk.gov.uk/out-and-about-in-norfolk/norfolk-trails

Long-distance routes

- The Weavers' Way passes through the northern Broads and then goes on to North Norfolk
- The Norfolk Coast Path takes you through the Broads at Horsey and Winterton
- The Wherryman's Way follows the River Yare from Norwich to Great Yarmouth
- The Angles Way goes south from Great Yarmouth and into the Suffolk Brecks

More info

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/the-blog/exploring-the-broads-by-bus-from-norwich

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/nature-reserves

www.norfolk.gov.uk/out-and-about-in-norfolk/norfolk-trails (long-distance routes and other walks)

www.discoversuffolk.org.uk

www.alltrails.com

www.komoot.com

www.outdooractive.com

Keep going

Norwich Castle Keep (A4) is reopening this summer after a multi-million-pound redevelopment. The Royal Palace Reborn project takes the keep back to its medieval past but in a contemporary way, so that as many people as possible can delve into its history, its nooks and crannies, and its significance for Norfolk and the Broads.

The origins of the castle keep, the stone building we see today, which was restored in Victorian times, actually go back 950 years, to medieval times. This was also the period that saw the creation of one of the most distinctive parts of the Broads landscape we know today – the shallow lakes interconnected by rivers and dykes (smaller waterways) that we call broads.

William I (William the Conqueror) ordered work to begin on the castle in 1067 and in 1121 the keep was completed. It was intended to be a royal palace, not a defensive building. Over the medieval period the castle was also the centre for legal and financial rule over the region.

Meanwhile in the Broads, peat digging was getting under way. From around the 12th-14th centuries, the demand for timber and fuel was so high that most woodland was felled, and peat was dug to provide an alternative fuel for heating and cooking. Documentary evidence from Norwich Cathedral (A4, another wonderful medieval building to visit) shows that substantial amounts of peat were dug, in a region that was then one of the most highly populated parts of the country. Rising water levels then flooded the peat diggings, forming the broads. Doctor Joyce Lambert was the first to establish the origin of the broads, leading to publication in 1960 of *The Making of the Broads*. You can listen to a recording of Joyce Lambert talking about her discovery at

www.broads-authority.gov.uk/about-the-broads/heritage-and-culture/people/broads-voices.

To find out more about 'The Story of Peat', visit the new exhibition, opening this April at the Museum of the Broads at Stalham (C1). The exhibition has been funded through Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL). To find out more about FiPL projects, and how important peat is now and for the future, turn to page 75.

A key place to visit in the Broads to step back to medieval times is the remains of St Benet's Abbey (D3) on the River Bure, where you can discover the world of the medieval monks. Artefacts from the abbey will be on display in the castle's new Gallery of Medieval Life. There are moorings at the abbey or you can walk there from Ludham Bridge or Ludham village (there's also a very small accessible car park). Tours take place at the abbey from June to September, every Wednesday and Saturday at 2pm. Other places to visit in the Broads that will take you back to the medieval world include the many churches with medieval origins, such as St Helen's at Ranworth (C3), known as the cathedral of the Broads.

Back at the castle, over the centuries it evolved to become a prison and then a museum, which has itself been through many changes. The latest changes take it back to its origins, reinstating the medieval floors and rooms in the keep, through a major engineering, construction and redevelopment project, with finance from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. There's also a new visitor entrance, cafe and shop for the museum site. When the keep reopens in summer 2024, these newly accessible spaces will mean that for the first time in 900 years visitors can explore all five levels of the keep – from basement to battlements and from there take in the spectacular views.

www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/norwich-castle

www.cathedral.org.uk

www.museumofthebroads.org.uk

www.norfarchtrust.org.uk/project/st-benets-abbey

www.ranworthchurch.com

Life in the reedbeds, with Wally Mason

If you spend your life on the marshes, you notice the weather, the daily and seasonal changes, as well as the extremes. “Seen a lot of changes in my time,” says Wally, “including the 1953 floods, 1963 winter and the gales of 1987.”

Wally was born in 1947. He began reed cutting with his father in the winter of 1963, near Rockland, and remembers the River Yare being frozen – a harsh introduction to working life. His father would check the wind direction to know which way to cut the reed, and Wally learnt the knack of walking and cutting with the scythe at the same time, cutting swathes of about a yard of reed with each swish of the scythe. Even when he had other local jobs, for reed cutting is by its

nature a seasonal occupation, taking place in the winter, he'd cut at weekends with his father.

Now his own three sons work with him when they can. He still cuts regularly, though it's become a hobby rather than a living. Over his time he's seen the changes from cutting by hand with a scythe, a method unchanged itself for hundreds of years, through to machine cutting with a form of mower. When he started, everyone cut by hand, now very few do on a regular basis, apart from Wally. When he was younger, he'd cut 50-60 bundles on good day. Reed is sold by the bundle and it must take three hand spans to get round a bundle, generally taken as 24" now; the strings used to tie a bundle are 28-30" long.

It's hard work in tough conditions however you do it, but Wally has adapted over the years and now uses a small hand scythe and a small wooden frame to rest the bundle of reed against while cleaning and dressing it. Yes, raking or combing out the unwanted broken or old pieces of reed or any bits of other plants and loosely tying the bundle is known as 'cleaning and dressing'. He uses the traditional board to tap the base of the bundle on to get it tight and into shape and then tied tightly. The good thing about hand cutting is that there are no odd loose or short pieces, it's better cleaned and therefore of a better, more uniform quality; thatchers like it for the high quality. Norfolk reed should last over 50 years on a thatched roof.

In the Broads, there are large areas of commercially cut reedbeds in the valleys of the rivers Ant and Thurne, at places such as How Hill (where the Broads Authority harvests from the nature reserve), Hickling and Horsey, and at Haddiscoe Island, where Wally mainly cuts now. Cutters need to have permission from the landowner, often a farmer, to go and cut, and may also have to pay a fee. Management for nature conservation, maintaining the water levels

and keeping the reedbeds cut and clear of scrub, makes good commercial sense too, producing good quality reed for thatching. Growing and cutting reed was the original form of paludiculture or wet farming in the Broads – see page 73 to find out about other recent developments. Marshes and reedbeds are also a natural flood defence.

Wally feels there's no better place than Haddiscoe Island for wildlife and taking in the big views of the Broads. The Island is an intriguing place, surrounded by the rivers Yare and Waveney and the New Cut (a canal new in 1833). Among birds, marsh harriers and kingfishers are two of his frequently seen favourites. Sometimes he'll see a marsh harrier chasing a hare around. There are a lot of deer in the reedbeds too, and sometimes the deer and hares will swim across a dyke (or small waterway) to safety. There are wonderful views the full length of The Island, towards Breydon Water and Burgh Castle, and you can pick out Reedham Church and of course the remains of many mills. There are very few houses though.

“After spending seven decades on our broads and rivers I feel very privileged to have done this.”

Where to visit to find out more about reed cutting and thatching

- Toad Hole Cottage, How Hill (see page 14)
- Museum of the Broads, Stalham
www.museumofthebroads.org.uk
- Haddiscoe Island is a remote place to visit, though it's not far from Haddiscoe Station and the village of St Olaves. It's possible to follow a perimeter path around The Island, but it's about 12 miles over rough ground, liable to flooding. If you do intend to walk there, please plan ahead and take care.

- In St Olaves you can also visit the remains of a small medieval priory.

www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/st-olaves-priory/history

www.broads-authority.gov.uk/about-the-broads/heritage-and-culture

www.wisearchive.co.uk/projects

www.norfolkreed.co.uk

Land of the windmills

“Where can I see a windmill?” is one of the popular questions for staff at our information centres. But do many of the enquirers realise that most of the mills in the Broads are drainage windmills, not mills for grinding corn? Today there are still 63 drainage mills of all kinds left in the Broads, a reminder of the endeavour to drain the marshes over the last 400 years. However, the majority of the mills were built from the early 1800s to the early 1900s, to drain the marshes dry enough for keeping cattle and growing crops.

The Water, Mills & Marshes programme, which concluded recently and was led by the Broads Authority and funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, included a major project to restore four of the drainage mills in the Halvergate Marshes area and one other, further up the River Yare. These were Mutton’s Mill and High’s Mill, both near Halvergate; Six Mile House Mill, across the River Bure from Runham; North Mill, near Reedham; and Strumpshaw Steam Engine Pump House (a rare steam-powered mill) on the RSPB reserve at Strumpshaw Fen. The work was carried out involving students from City College Norwich, providing training in heritage building and carpentry techniques to help encourage a future workforce to care for historic buildings. The project has received several awards, the latest was in autumn 2023, when the Broads Authority won the

prestigious Norwich and Norfolk Design and Craftsmanship Award in the conservation category for the work at Mutton's Mill. We were also overall winner for sustainability. The awards are made by the Norfolk branch of the Royal Institute of British Architects, the Norwich Society and Norwich University of the Arts.

By their nature mills aren't always easy to visit, they are often in remote locations and can involve a lot of steps to climb if they include inside access. Of the recently restored Halvergate Marshes mills, Mutton's (about 1.5 miles from Halvergate) is one of the easiest to visit (external viewing only). You can also follow the full Halvergate Mills Trail, starting from Stones Road at Halvergate, or Berney Arms Station (E4). It's a beautiful circular walk, but at about eight miles over rough ground, it takes about four hours, so it's not for everyone. On the trail you can also see English Heritage's Berney Arms Mill, one of the tallest in the country, which is awaiting further restoration. You can watch a video about the restoration of Mutton's Mill at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y8duh0z4oqk.

Another Water, Mills & Marshes project, WISEArchive's Life and Work on the Broads 1920-2020, will help you find out more about what it was like to work the mills.

At the other end of the accessibility scale, the restored Horsey Windpump (E2) is easily reached by road or water and is fully accessible to view externally, plus the ground floor is accessible to wheelchair users (see page 24). Restored Thurne Mill (D3) is a short walk (about 100m) along Thurne Dyke and is also a great location to experience the dark skies of the Broads for a bit of stargazing. If you visit How Hill (see page 14) you can see the mills there and the restored Stubb Mill is on the Norfolk Wildlife Trust's nature reserve at Hickling (D2).

You can see Herringfleet Mill (E6) from the Herringfleet 24-hour moorings, or by walking from Herringfleet Hills or Somerleyton (about a mile). Saint Olave's Mill (D5) is not far away and is one of many cared for by the Norfolk Windmills Trust. You can walk to it downstream from St Olave's Bridge near the Bell Inn (about a mile). The trust's other mills include Stracey Arms (D4, on the River Bure and the A47, about 2.5 miles from Acle) and a whole group of mill buildings (including North Mill and Polkey's Mill, D5), which you can walk to on the Wherryman's Way from Reedham (about 2 miles). Another of the trust's mills is fully restored Hardley Mill (C5), open to visitors arriving by water or on foot from Hardley Staithe (about a mile). "If the sails are turning – we are open," they say. Another video will tell you all about the mill and explain how drainage mills actually worked... www.youtube.com/watch?v=su5xCGL4imA&t=3s

You can even stay in a Broads mill if you wish, in corn mills at Sutton (C2) and How Hill (C2), or in a drainage mill at Stalham (C1). Last but not least, there's National Mills Weekend, go to www.spab.org.uk/mills/NMW. Happy visiting!

www.watermillsandmarshes.org.uk (Halvergate Mills Trail)

www.broads-authority.gov.uk/looking-after/projects/water,-mills-and-marshes

www.english-heritage.org.uk

www.wisearchive.co.uk/projects

www.nationaltrust.org.uk

www.norfolk.gov.uk/out-and-about-in-norfolk/windmills

www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

www.hardleywindmilluk.org

Project news

What's been happening?

Here's news of a small selection of Broads Authority partnership projects. To find out more about all our projects go to

www.broads-authority.gov.uk

Wildlife recovery

Norfolk hawker dragonfly

Forty years ago, when the British Dragonfly Society was founded, the future of this dragonfly with bright green eyes and a gingery body was bleak. As a symbol of the special and fragile watery landscape of the Broads, it was adopted as the logo for the Broads Authority in 1983 and for many years it was almost entirely restricted to the Broads. But this has now changed for the better.

It started to expand across Norfolk and Suffolk, then became established in Cambridgeshire, Kent, Hertfordshire, Dorset and Devon. It's even been seen at the London Wetland Centre and as far north as Yorkshire and Lancashire. Where will it turn up next?

In the Broads, many marshes remain undrained and active conservation management work by the Broads Authority and other organisations is restoring habitats for wildlife, including dragonflies. Norfolk hawkers need good grazing marsh dyke systems with clean, non-saline water, rushy margins, and preferably an abundance of water soldier, as well as other water plants.

Where and when? Good places to see them include the nature reserves at How Hill (see page 14), Hickling, Strumpshaw and Carlton. Best time to see them: May to August.

Water vole

The population of this rare creature has started to recover in the Broads after many years of decline, thanks to control of its main

predator, the American mink, a non-native species bred for fur from the 1920s. Populations of escaped mink bred intensively in the Broads, damaging populations of wild birds and mammals.

A mink trapping programme started in the Broads in 2003, managed by Waterlife Recovery Trust and involving the Broads Authority and others. Last year only seven mink were caught in Norfolk and five in Suffolk, and Waterlife Recovery Trust believes that the invasive species has been nearly eradicated from these counties, with a corresponding increase in the recovery of water voles. The trapping programme is being expanded from the Thames to Lincolnshire, which will reduce the likelihood of mink returning to the Broads and will expand the area where the water vole is protected.

Where and when? They are not easy to spot, but you may see a hole in a dyke bank indicating a burrow or you may hear a splash as they dive into the water. Take a boat trip on the Electric Eel at How Hill (see page 14) and you may be lucky. Best time to see them: spring to autumn – they are most numerous in September.

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/nature-reserves

Planning for biodiversity

In autumn 2023, in order to fulfil a government initiative, we welcomed a new member of staff as our first Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Officer. What's that all about? The Broads Authority is the local planning authority (LPA) for the Broads and essentially, the new officer's job is about ensuring a contribution to nature recovery through the national planning system. BNG is a government requirement and is a way to contribute to the recovery of nature while developing land – making sure that habitat for wildlife is in a better state than it was before development. LPAs will have to approve a biodiversity net gain plan for development work before it can start. Developers must try to avoid loss of habitat on land they

plan to develop, or they must create habitat on the site or elsewhere. The new BNG requirements will be incorporated into the new Local Plan for the Broads (our planning policy document), which is currently under review. www.broads-authority.gov.uk/planning

Peat for the future

Broads peat is up to 10,000 years old, but it's very much a key part of the future, too. Peat forms from compressed dead plants in wet areas, such as fens, and peatland stores six times as much carbon as tropical rainforest, helping to combat the effects of climate change. Draining peatland releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

With funding from government programmes, the Broads Authority has developed several successful projects related to peat over the last few years, working in many partnerships.

The FibreBroads project, awarded by Natural England, is the most important and innovative. We are growing and testing new wetland crops and products such as novel construction materials. Two further grants, awarded in January 2024, are helping us engage with farmers about water management and storage to supply peaty floodplains with water in our hotter, drier summers and wetter winters.

The Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme is a government fund set up in 2021, through which organisations such as the Broads Authority can award government grants to farmers and other land managers to carry out projects that support the environment, mitigate the impacts of climate change or support nature-friendly farm businesses, restore historic buildings or provide public access opportunities.

FiPL has been extended until March 2025, and is a mechanism for achieving our objectives in responding to climate change and flood risk, and improving landscapes for biodiversity and agriculture. Many

of the 50 projects funded so far are related to paludiculture or wet farming on peat soils. One of the original wet farming crops is reed, traditionally grown in the Broads. You can read more about the FiPL scheme on our website, including how those from the private, public and voluntary sectors can apply for current funding.

www.broads-authority.gov.uk/looking-after/projects

Hulver Ground and Buttle Marsh

These two places are both close to How Hill, the National Nature Reserve owned by the Broads Authority (see page 14). We have purchased Hulver Ground, which will enable us to extend our direct conservation management work in the valley of the River Ant, including preserving habitat for rare species found there, such as the critically endangered crested buckler-fern. In all, a quarter of the UK's rarest wildlife is found in the Broads.

The Authority bought the area at Hulver Ground (opposite Buttle Marsh, which it already owns) in 2023, with a government grant through the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Buttle Marsh has been managed by the Authority since 2003, however due to a lack of water on the site it has not reached optimal condition. With funding from the government's Nature for Climate Peatland Restoration Grant Scheme, we will be able to complete the restoration.

Buttle Marsh (named after one of the local words for the rare fen bird, the bittern) will be 'rewetted', meaning more water will be retained on the land, creating conditions that will allow peat to build up. To find out a bit about Broads peat digging in the past, see page 66.

You can see Buttle Marsh on your left walking from How Hill along the River Ant towards Ludham Bridge and you'll find some public

events for Buttle Marsh at www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/whats-on.
www.broads-authority.gov.uk/looking-after/projects

Park protectors

National Park Nature Award

The Broads is in good hands. In autumn 2023, Nick Sanderson, the Broads Authority's Education Officer, won the National Park Nature Award for his community nature recovery work at Barton Turf Nature Reserve in the northern Broads. The award is one of a series made each year by the Campaign for National Parks, with sponsorship from WWF-UK (World Wide Fund for Nature), to people they call 'park protectors'. Nick saw the potential of the Barton Turf site and began a partnership to transform it with Di Smith, the Centre Manager, as well as many others.

Nick said: "It's really about the team, about the volunteers, the staff and the young people who've been involved who are really making a difference to nature conservation and have hopefully been inspired by it as well."

Education involves a very wide remit for Nick, working with schools, community groups and charities. The Barton Turf project is one of many, changing the lives of people from diverse backgrounds, including young people who don't usually have access to the Broads, people with complex needs, asylum seekers and refugees.

To find out more about our education work go to
<http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/learning>

100 Years of Ted Ellis

Go back 100 years and someone else was just starting on protecting the Broads, in a very different way. Ted Ellis was a naturalist, writer and broadcaster who entered the lives of many people in the Broads and beyond. He began keeping journals of his observations of Broads

wildlife as a young boy, going on to become Keeper of Natural History at the Castle Museum in Norwich and to create the nature reserve at Wheatfen, Surlingham.

Broads Authority education staff and Wheatfen Nature Reserve have been working on an education project to digitise a selection of Ted's journals, and running events to bring his store of knowledge and his love and concern for the Broads and its wildlife to a contemporary audience. He began his searches on the beach at Gorleston, adjacent to Great Yarmouth, and some of the events have involved looking at his records of the places he knew and comparing them with those places now. Some have disappeared and some have changed beyond recognition, but, encouragingly, some haven't changed too much and some are in a better state now than they were then!

"I am very jealous for the pastoral peace of the East Anglian countryside. If it is destroyed, where will town dwellers and all the sick-of-suburbs people turn to find unspoiled country? Let us remain a breathing space for the cure of souls," he said. Find out more at www.broads-authority.gov.uk/looking-after/projects and www.wheatfen.org

For other nature reserves to visit go to www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/nature-reserves

Info

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk

The visitor website for the Broads is mobile-friendly, and has all you need to know about where to go and what to do, where to stay ashore and afloat, where to eat, boating, special events and everything else you need to visit the Broads by land and water. There's also a blog, full of inspirational ideas for your visit. Or find us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Visit the Broads](https://www.facebook.com/Visit%20the%20Broads)

For all the latest news, offers and events from the Broads National Park, sign up to our newsletter mailing list:

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/newsletter

If you organise special events, you can submit events for our website at any time – go to www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/whats-on

If you have a business in the Broads and would like to add or update your company information on the site, please contact us:

Broads Authority

Yare House

62-64 Thorpe Road

Norwich NR1 1RY

01603 610734

enquiries@broads-authority.gov.uk

www.broads-authority.gov.uk

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk

Find out how to join Visit the Broads, which works in partnership with the Broads Authority to provide a strong voice for Broads tourism-related businesses, at www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/business

You can also find the Broads National Park on:

Twitter/X www.x.com/BroadsNP

Facebook www.facebook.com/Broads National Park

Instagram www.instagram.com/broadsnationalpark

Broads National Park information centres

For a warm welcome and expert local advice whatever your enquiry, visit the Broads National Park information centres, where our knowledgeable staff will help you make the most of your time in the

Broads. You'll find the centres at Hoveton, How Hill and Ranworth. See the telephone directory and pages 11-18 for more details. The map on page 4 and the boating map on the centre pages of the printed version of Broadcaster will also help you to find your way around. Grid references mentioned throughout Broadcaster (for example C2) refer to the map on page 4 of the printed version of Broadcaster.

The centres stock leaflets and sell an extensive range of maps, guides, books, postcards, souvenirs and locally made ice cream. They have lots of boating info to help you too, including tide tables and navigation maps. You can book for Broads National Park boat trips and buy short visit boat licences.

For guidance on drone use go to
www.broads-authority.gov.uk/drones

We look forward to seeing you!

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/information-centres

Broads Briefing

Sign up for our Broads Briefing newsletter, which covers all aspects of our work www.broads-authority.gov.uk/newsletter

UK National Parks and Landscapes

www.nationalparks.uk

www.national-landscapes.org.uk

Public transport

www.VisitTheBroads.co.uk/getting-here

www.goodjourney.org.uk/norfolk-good-journey-county

Buses

For all bus services in the Broads contact

Traveline 0871 200 22 33

www.traveline.info

Trains

National Rail Enquiries 03457 48 49 50

www.nationalrail.co.uk

www.greateranglia.co.uk

www.bitternline.com

www.wherrylines.com

www.eastsuffolklines.co.uk

Weather

www.metoffice.gov.uk/about-us/what/met-office-weather-app

Visit the Broads with your dog – on land or water

Dogs are allowed on public rights of way (footpaths, bridleways and byways) under effective control

- Routes called permissive paths may not allow dogs and many nature reserves don't allow dogs
- On areas known as open access land, dogs must be kept on a lead no more than two metres long between 1 March and 31 July to protect ground-nesting birds, and all year round near farm animals
- Dog owners must not allow pets to 'worry' or attack farm animals
- Restrictions on dogs shouldn't unreasonably affect access for assistance dog users. If you have a problem, contact the local authority or the Royal Kennel Club.
- 01296 318540 www.thekennelclub.org.uk

- For places to visit try www.thebarkingbugle.co.uk
- For boating with dogs, see Boating Basics, starting on page 45

Please

- clear up after dogs
- keep dogs close by, under effective control (on leads if necessary) and in sight
- check access for dogs with places you plan to visit and respect restrictions on dogs
- don't let dogs disturb people, wildlife or farm animals, or wander near them
- if you or your dog are bothered by farm animals, let go of their lead so that you can both get to safety
- never enter the water to rescue a pet – you are putting your own life at risk

www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code

Telephone directory

Emergencies – coastguard, fire, police, ambulance 999 or 112

Bridges

- Potter Heigham Bridge pilot – Phoenix Fleet boatyard
01692 670460

Swing bridges – you can also contact these swing bridges on VHF radio Channel 12

- Oulton Broad 0330 852 5351
- Reedham 0330 858 4655

- Somerleyton 0330 858 4656
- Trowse 01603 675297 / 01603 763440 – seven days' notice required for openings

Broads Authority – main office 01603 610734

Broads Control – Broads Authority navigation advice and incidents
01603 756056

Environment Agency – incident hotline 0800 80 70 60 – use this for pollution incidents. During the day you can also call Broads Authority Broads Control on 01603 756056 or for serious pollution incidents outside office hours you can also call the coastguard on 999 or 112.

Hospitals

- James Paget University Hospital (Gorleston, Great Yarmouth – 24-hour casualty) 01493 452452
- Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (Norwich – 24-hour casualty) 01603 286286

Information centres – Broads National Park

- Hoveton / Wroxham (see page 13) 01603 756097
- Ranworth (see page 14) 01603 756094
- Toad Hole Cottage, How Hill, Ludham (see page 15) 01603 756096
- Mutford Lock 01502 574946 / 01502 531778

NHS 111 – call 111 for 24-hour urgent but non-emergency medical help www.111.nhs.uk

Police – non-emergency 101

Tourist information points – may be seasonal

- Beccles: Beccles Books, 1 Exchange House, Exchange Square 01502 716806; Bear & Bells, 11 Old Market; Beccles Station Cafe, Station Road; Library, Blyburgate; Quay Deli & Coffee House, Fen Lane; SportStore, 33 New Market
- Bungay: Art Trading Company, 55 Earsham Street; Library, Wharton Street
- Loddon: Library, 31 Church Plain
- Lowestoft: Kirkley Centre, 154 London Road South; Library, Clapham Road South; Lowestoft Arts Centre, 13 St Peter's Street; Railway Station, Denmark Road
- Oulton Broad: Library, 92 Bridge Road; Yacht Station, Bridge Road

Wildlife emergency

- Marine and Wildlife Rescue 01692 650338
- RSPCA 0300 1234 999

Yacht stations – Broads National Park

- Great Yarmouth (see page 45) 01493 842794 / 07766 398238
- Norwich (see page 46) 01603 612980 / 07747 065378
- Ranworth (see page 46) 01603 756094
- Reedham (see page 46) 01493 701867 / 07733 102566

Yacht stations – other providers

- Beccles 01502 712225 / 07938 845744
- Oulton Broad 01502 574946

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