

**Strategic Direction**  
Report by Chief Executive

**Summary:** This report sets out progress in implementing the Authority's Strategic Priorities for 2015/16 and draft priorities for 2016/17.

**Recommendations:**

- (i) To note the updates for 2015/16.
- (ii) To consider the proposal that the same five priorities be retained for 2016/17, together with two additional areas of focus, namely climate change and sea level rise, and the Comprehensive Spending Review.

**1 Progress on Strategic Priorities 2015/16**

- 1.1 The Authority uses a small set of annual strategic priorities with accompanying projects to help monitor the delivery of the Broads Plan. Progress against the five priorities for 2015/16 is outlined below and in Appendices 1 and 2. Updates on all objectives in the Broads Plan are posted on the e-Plan website at: [www.broads-plan.co.uk](http://www.broads-plan.co.uk).

**2 Draft Strategic Priorities 2016/17**

- 2.1 The work on most of the current year's Strategic Priorities flows beyond one year and therefore it is suggested that they (Items 1-5 below) should be retained in an updated form for 2016/17. Two additions (6-7) are suggested for Members to consider:

- Climate change and sea level rise
- Comprehensive Spending Review

**1. Broads Plan Review**

Review and update the Broads Plan, the strategic management plan for the Broads. Work with partners, local communities and other stakeholders to assess achievements (Broads Plan 2011) and set aspirational strategy for 2017-22. Work has started on developing the new plan with scoping workshops recently held for Members and the Broads Forum.

**2. Broads Landscape Partnership**

The Authority and its partners have been successful in their initial bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for £2.6 million under the Landscape Partnership Programme. A major commitment for the Authority will be coordinating the development phase over the next 18 months.

### **3. Hickling Broad Enhancement Project**

A short and long-term approach for the management of Hickling Broad, building on scientific evidence from the Broads Lake Review, has been agreed and the Authority has committed resources for 2016/17 to take the Project further forward. An Expression of Interest has been submitted for EU funding and we hope to be invited to submit a full application in January 2016. The proposed enhancements to Hickling are simple but the execution of them is complex, balancing the needs of the ecology, landowners and users of the Broad.

### **4. Promoting the Broads**

The Authority is currently reviewing and updating the Broads Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan in partnership with local businesses. This will be completed in the current financial year. The implementation of the Action Plan and crucially the branding initiative will be strategic issues for 2016/17, the latter dependent on the outcome of the Judicial Review process in February 2016.

### **5. Stakeholder Action Plan**

While much of the Stakeholder Action Plan has been delivered, it is suggested that it remain a priority to keep the Authority's focus on engagement through mechanisms such as the Parish Forums and workshops for Members.

### **6. Adaptation to Climate Change and Sea Level Rise**

Climate change and sea level rise remain the biggest long-term threats to the Broads. At the recent Broads Climate Partnership meeting, a programme of further research on some of the key adaptations was discussed. Given the importance and profile of this work it is suggested that it is included as a Strategic Priority.

### **7. Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) – subject to decision on NPG**

The Chancellor will be announcing the result of the CSR on November 25. The indications are that Defra has with three other Departments settled for cuts over four years of on average 30%. At this stage there is no indication what this means for National Park Grant. In the event of substantial reductions in the Authority's income, a review of all expenditure will need to be undertaken and revised priorities determined.

Background papers:	Nil
Authors:	John Packman, Maria Conti
Date of report:	9 November 2015
Broads Plan objectives:	CC2, BD1, BD3, BD5, PE1, PE2 and TR2
Appendices:	APPENDIX 1 - Strategic Priorities 2015/16 APPENDIX 2 – Feedback on Broads Parish Forum held on 26 October 2015

**Strategic Priorities 2015/16****1. Broads Plan Review**

Review and update the Broads Plan, the strategic management plan for the Broads. Work with partners, local communities and other stakeholders to assess achievements (Broads Plan 2011) and set aspirational strategy for 2017-22. The proposal to develop a long-term navigation strategy will be assessed as part of this review.

**2. Broads Landscape Partnership Bid**

Submit an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for £3m for a Landscape Partnership Scheme. If the application receives a successful HLF decision, subsequent development phase objectives will be developed. The proposed multiple projects within the bid would contribute significantly to the delivery of the Broads Plan.

**3. Hickling Broad Lake Enhancement Project**

Develop a long-term approach for the management of Hickling Broad, building on scientific evidence from the Broads Lake Review. In the short term, progress development of a number of smaller projects to meet immediate concerns.

**4. Promoting the Broads**







- Produce Broads National Park branding guidelines
- Review and update the Broads Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan in partnership with local businesses








**5. Stakeholder Action Plan**



Implement multiple actions in response to the issues identified in the 2014 stakeholder surveys of hire boat operators, private boat owners, residents and visitors.








Updates on all Broads Plan objectives are posted on the e-Plan website at: [www.broads-plan.co.uk](http://www.broads-plan.co.uk)

## Strategic Priorities Progress Report – update November 2015

Priority	Lead	Key milestones	Progress to date	Status
<b>Broads Plan Review</b>	Maria Conti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Scoping Mar - Nov 2015</li> <li>▪ Consult on first draft plan by end Feb 2016</li> <li>▪ Consult on revised draft by end Jul 2016</li> <li>▪ Adopt plan Mar 2017</li> <li>▪ Implement plan Apr 2017</li> </ul>	Broads Plan workshops held with BA and Navigation Committee Members on 7 Oct and Broads Forum on 5 Nov. First draft plan in preparation.	
<b>Broads Landscape Partnership Scheme: Water, Mills and Marshes</b>	Will Burchnell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Submit first application to HLF by 1 Jun 2015</li> <li>▪ HLF decision Oct 2015</li> <li>▪ (TBC: Further development phases Nov 2015 - May 2017; delivery phase May 2017- May 2022)</li> </ul>	BA successful in 1st stage bid for £2.6m from HLF for Landscape Partnership Scheme. Development funding of £226,000 also been awarded to help Partnership progress plans to apply for full grant. Development phase work to begin this year with delivery phase scheduled for 2017.	 
<b>Hickling Broad Enhancement Project</b>	Trudi Wakelin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Collate baseline data including Broads Lake Review outputs by Apr 2015</li> <li>(b) Hold Lake Review stakeholder workshop Apr 2015</li> <li>(c) Develop partnership approach with stakeholders and agree refreshed vision for Hickling by Sept 2015</li> <li>(d) Seek planning permission and in principle agreement from regulators to deliver vision</li> <li>(e) Develop external funding options - Jan 2016</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Completed</li> <li>(b) Completed</li> <li>(c) Completed</li> <li>(d) NE assent received; detailed design on priority area to be worked up.</li> <li>(e) Awaiting feedback from Interreg funding EOI.</li> </ul>	  

Priority	Lead	Key milestones	Progress to date	Status
		(f) Undertake supporting research and pilots to inform feasibility by Mar 2016	(f) Nicospan trial due to start Nov 15.	
<b>Promoting the Broads</b>	Lorna Marsh	(a) Produce Broads National Park branding guidelines for tourism industry by Summer 2015	(a) Guidelines produced; awaiting legal guidance for dissemination in light of judicial review	
		(b) Review Sustainable Tourism Strategy and Action Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoping Mar - Nov 2015</li> <li>• Consult on first draft plan by end Feb 2016</li> <li>• Consult on revised draft by end Jul 2016</li> <li>• Adopt plan Mar 2017; implement Apr 2017</li> </ul>	(b) Consultants appointed. Stakeholder consultation ongoing and first draft strategy to be produced in Dec 2015.	
<b>Stakeholder Action Plan</b> (extract for reporting)	Andrea Long	(a) Workshop with hire boat operators to understand their concerns	(a) Workshop held.	★    
		(b) Explanation of tolls structure in Broadsheet; website content for tolls information	(b) Website amended to communicate restructure for effectively; Feb edition of Broadsheet to include updated information.	
		(c) Circulate Bulletin to parish clerks	(c) Bulletin to be replaced by regular Chief Executive's update via email, a version of which will be circulated to parish clerks for dissemination to residents and other contacts	
		(d) Residents' newsletter	(d) See response to (c ) above	
		(e) New Broads Parish Forum format	(e) New 'issue specific' format trialled	
		(f) Promotion of Broads Experiences		

Priority	Lead	Key milestones	Progress to date	Status
		(g) Promotion of Proximity Campaign, including Greeters' Initiative	<p>successfully at Hickling on 26 Oct (Thurne/Lower Bure area forum). Next forum to be held early 2016 to promote Landscape Partnership Scheme (Waveney/Yare). (See Appendix 2)</p> <p>(e) Promotion of Broads Experiences will form part of a new Enjoy the Broads website and possible supporting material in 2016.</p> <p>(f) Greeters' initiative and other Proximity actions incorporated in Sustainable Tourism Strategy review for delivery in 2016.</p>	  

Key	Progress		
	Project completed		Unlikely project will be delivered on time, significant worries
	Project on track, no causes for concern		Project will not be delivered on time, major concerns
	Good progress, some challenges in delivery		Direction of progress since last meeting
	Project timetable slipping, plan in place to address concerns		

### Feedback on Broads Parish Forums

#### Thurne & Lower Bure Parish Forum – 26 October 2015, Hickling

The Audit into Consultation Activity and Partnership Provisions in January-March 2015 identified the need for formal feedback from each Broads Parish Forum to the following Broads Authority.

The most recent Parish Forum was held at Hickling Barn, Hickling on the evening of 26 October 2015. This was the first of our 'issue specific' forums, following consideration of the forum format by the Broads Authority in July 2015. The purpose of this forum was to raise local community awareness of the Hickling Broad Enhancement Project (a BA Strategic Priority 2015/16) and get public feedback on the draft project proposals. The project has evolved through a partnership process involving a wide range of stakeholder organisations and local people, partly facilitated by the Upper Thurne Working Group.

The format for the forum involved a short 'drop in' session where members of the public could chat informally to Broads Authority Officers and Members, followed by a formal presentation on the Hickling Project and a question and answer session. The formal session was introduced by the Chair, with presentations and Q&A responses from John Packman, Trudi Wakelin, Dan Hoare and Rob Rogers.

The meeting was well attended by around 80 members of the public. In addition to Broads Authority officers, nine members from Broads Authority and Navigation Committee were in attendance.

Questions from the floor included:

Questions	Responses
How is the feral geese population being managed?	BA working with BTO to research migration and movement patterns, much of which appears to be regional. Dealing with overpopulations causes is a sensitive topic.
What are the effects of land use change on phosphorus in the Upper Thurne?	Change of land use from arable to grazing pasture is shown to reduce nutrients in water courses, but political will is needed to make such changes.
When did phosphorus start to be laid down in the Broad?	Phosphorus is predominantly found in the upper, more recently accumulated sediments, laid down in the last 50-60 years

How deep is the sediment in Hickling, and what is its composition?	It varies – better quality sediment such as marl sits under more sloppy, dark loose sediment layer which is anything from a few cms to 1m. Loose sediment focuses in deeper areas such as previously dredged channels.
What are the conditions needed for dredging?	Temperature of 8° or lower, greater water depth. Work must be completed by end of February 2016. If temperature conditions are not met within this window of opportunity, work cannot be carried out because of risk of Pymnesium bloom.
Will dredging cause damage to seed pods?	No, dredging removes the loose top layers of sediment only and does not go down into the seed bed.
The area was pumped previously; is lack of flushing an issue?	The only freshwater input is from Catfield Dyke pump, so there is very little flushing in the broad.
A possible solution is to divert water from the River Ant at Sutton across the flat dyke network to Catfield Dyke and into Hickling	Such a scheme would be prohibitively expensive. Would also divert water from Barton/Catfield, where water resource is already scarce. Land management and drainage issues are being discussed at next Upper Thurne Working Group meeting, with IDB representatives present.
What are the navigation user benefits of the proposed Hickling project works?	Project aims to create more healthy plant beds and biomass, with enhanced refuge areas. This overall enhancement of aquatic plants in the broad would provide a stronger case for plant management for navigation benefits in other parts of the broad.
<u>Land access – is there enough/too much?</u>  Not enough land-based access around the broad, very limited opportunities to view the broad. Windsurfers use 'beach' and keep it locked.  Could extend footpath access to broad from existing permissive footpath from	Points raised were comments rather than questions

<p>Catfield Dyke or Swim Coots Mill</p> <p>NWT – lot of visitor infrastructure on north side of broad; more footpath access created by flood protection embankment works, giving good views of the broad.</p> <p>More access would spoil the remoteness and cause disturbance to wildlife, current access levels are right.</p>	
<p>Major challenge is sourcing funding – important to ensure the project provides multiple outcomes, for navigation, recreation and biodiversity, to give the best chance of drawing in funding.</p>	<p>We always strive for multiple outcomes in the work we do, to meet all our statutory purposes.</p>
<p>How will BA respond to any further reductions in its National Park grant?</p>	<p>Working to draw in UK and European funds – currently awaiting HLF bid outcome, and undertaking EU bid for sediment management work. Also looking at commercial sponsorship (all National Parks) and commercial sales (e.g. through information centres).</p>

#### Next Parish Forum

Given the good attendance and interest at the Hickling Parish Forum, it appears that both the 'issue specific' format and the event publicity work well. Following the Authority's recent success in being awarded Heritage Lottery funding for the Landscape Partnership scheme, it is proposed to hold the next parish forum in the New Year within the defined Landscape Partnership area (Waveney/ Yare/ Chet triangle). The forum will promote public awareness and interest in the project during the early stages of its development. As with previous forums, there will also be a 'drop in' session for the public to meet and talk informally with BA Members and Officers on any issues of local interest.