

Broadland Rivers Catchment Plan
Report by Catchment Partnership Officer and Senior Ecologist

Summary:	The Broadland Rivers Catchment Plan, focussed on shared interest and multiple benefits, is the first stakeholder plan for this catchment. The key messages, shared vision, and 'goals' from the plan are included along with actions for the partnership.
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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The production of a Broadland Rivers Catchment Plan is a strategic priority for the Broads Authority in 2013/14 under objective CC4.2 of the Broads Plan *Promote sustainable planning and management of water resources at catchment and regional scale.*
- 1.2 The Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) is being rolled out nationally by Defra with the aim of delivering improvements to the water environment through targeted stakeholder engagement. The Broads Authority is co-hosting the Broadland Catchment Partnership with the Norfolk Rivers Trust.
- 1.3 Engagement activities including three stakeholder workshops have led to the production of the catchment plan and evidence review of key issues (Appendix 1). It is hoped that actions will feed into the River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for 2015-2021 that outlines actions that the Government, via the Environment Agency, will take to meet Water Framework Directive (WFD) requirements.
- 1.4 The plan includes an agreed shared vision, 'goals' and actions. It also provides facts and figures, outlines the issues and what's happening to improve these, and concludes with a summary of actions for all.
- 1.5 The input of partners within the Steering Group is acknowledged to the drafting process. In addition, a number of Broads Authority Officers have also been involved in the Plan's production.

2 Key Messages

- 2.1 Water is vital for drinking, growing crops and supporting industry. Most of us can reduce the amount of water that we waste, saving ourselves money, and benefiting rivers and wetlands. We also have the option to increase the amount of rainfall we capture or encourage it to go into the ground - using sustainable drainage systems - to replenish our vital groundwater aquifers.
- 2.2 Rivers and wetlands provide enjoyment for many people whether angling, canoeing, watching wildlife or enjoying picturesque views. Rivers receive our waste water and many have been modified for flood defence, milling and

navigation purposes. There are opportunities in the upper, non-tidal, areas to restore river reaches and even re-connect the floodplain - using low-cost techniques - where no flood risk to property occurs.

- 2.3 Land is essential for food and fuel, but it also provides other services to society including flood protection, freshwater provision, wildlife habitat and recreation. Managing land for these other services in targeted marginal locations, while supporting sustainable agriculture across the wider landscape, is the key to success.
- 2.4 Many different organisations are working within specific sectors to improve the catchment and protect their members' interests. There are also a number of initiatives in place. The Partnership wants to join up all of this work, sharing resources and involving local businesses and communities in developing, funding, and carrying out projects. We all have an impact on our catchment. By working together, we can take the necessary steps to improve our local environment, society and economy.

3 Shared vision for the Broadland Rivers Catchment by 2027

Note: The partners have agreed a shared vision for the Broadland Rivers Catchment and produced the plan to work towards it

- 3.1 The precious nature and value of water is widely recognised. The benefits that the catchment provides are understood and those who manage the land to provide these benefits are adequately rewarded.
- 3.2 Agriculture and water treatment are sustainable and organisations involved with the management of land and water work together effectively.
- 3.3 We have met the challenging targets to improve water quality, water supply and flood protection. Widespread understanding and support of the targets has motivated many people to change their practice to make a positive contribution.
- 3.4 Rivers function more naturally and the catchment supports a range of habitats and native species. Local action routinely brings multiple benefits and wildlife dependent on water is thriving and able to move around without impediment.
- 3.5 Communities embrace and celebrate water bodies in their local environment whilst their enthusiasm and knowledge is sought as part of decision making processes including recognition of priorities. Recreational use of water has increased in a sustainable way.
- 3.6 The common belief is that the water environment is in a far better shape than in 2012 and becoming adapted to future climate change.

4 Goals

4.1 To meet the shared vision for the Broadland Rivers Catchment, our goals are to:

- (i) **Land management**
Reduce run-off, soil, nutrient and pesticide loss and to link habitats and access
- (ii) **Waste water management**
Reduce nutrients from public and private waste water
- (iii) **Water management**
Increase water capture and water efficiency
- (iv) **Flood risk management and sustainable drainage**
Reduce and slow run-off and increase aquifer recharge
- (v) **River and floodplain management**
Increase habitat connectivity, reduce fish barriers and control invasive species
- (vi) **Recreation and understanding**
Increase sustainable use of, and learning about, water and wetlands
- (vii) **Investment**
Increase, combine and attract funding for projects

4.2 To achieve our goals we will encourage and promote:

- (a) uptake of cost-effective sustainable measures by individuals
- (b) targeting of the right measures in the right places for multiple benefits
- (c) close working between different organisations and groups

4.3 By 2027, we want to see:

- Rivers and broads meeting requirements of European legislation
- Nature conservation areas achieving national and European guideline standards
- No raw water supplies regularly at risk of failing drinking water standards

5 Partnership Action Summary for 2014/15 – ‘What will we do?’

5.1 The partnership has funding for a Catchment Officer until end of March 2015 along with some project funding. In this time the partners will progress the following areas supported by the Catchment Officer. These are not all encompassing as different organisations will be undertaking statutory and voluntary actions that are sign-posted in the current plan.

(i) **Land management**

Seek funding for additional independent advisers to provide ‘face-to-face’ advice and support to land managers and farmers.

Through existing advisers and agronomists, make potential run-off risk maps available to farmers to help locate effective measures.

Hold talks with farmers and their advisers to get their views on effective environmental land management measures and how best to incentivise these.

Agree, with all interest groups, suitable key locations for targeting environmental land management measures to provide multiple benefits.

(ii) **Waste water management**

Raise awareness of effects of misconnections, washing products, waste disposal and septic tank best practice at community events and on school visits.

Explore potential locations for reed beds and constructed wetlands and seek funding for local trials in areas where water bodies have high phosphorus levels.

(iii) **Water management**

Raise awareness of water efficiency, capture and water friendly gardening and promote free water saving packs at community events and on school visits.

Support the whole farm water management approach by Essex & Suffolk Water in the Waveney catchment and promote in other sub-catchments.

(iv) **Flood risk management and sustainable drainage**

Agree key areas of high flood incident and upstream run-off risk with landowners, communities, flood authorities and drainage boards.

Seek funding for demonstration projects for rural drainage in high run-off risk areas in each of the Bure, Wensum, Waveney and Yare sub-catchments in association with local communities.

(v) **River and floodplain management**

Agree potential locations, in non-tidal locations, to re-connect river with floodplain, and seek funding for projects.

Scope potential for a woody debris installation project on the Upper River Bure with relevant farmers and landowners.

Establish priorities for fish barrier by-pass, or removal, and eel projects involving local community action, and seek funding for demonstration schemes.

Promote workshops for landowners and encourage co-ordinated invasive species control on rivers, including extending 'Check, Clean, Dry' messages beyond the Broads.

(vi) **Understanding and recreation**

Raise awareness of riparian owner responsibilities, river care, canoe trails and angling opportunities at community events and on school visits.

Co-ordinate volunteer catchment walkover surveys of tributaries and compare findings with run-off and habitat models.

Populate website and information sharing facilities to include mapping, projects, events and activities at a sub-catchment scale.

Raise awareness of catchment processes and the water cycle at community events and on school visits.

(vii) **Investment**

Seek funding opportunities around sustainable catchment management and climate change adaptation and include European partners where necessary.

6 **Partnership Action Summary - *What can you do?***

6.1 **All business owners** - visit www.carbontrust.com to see how you can save water and save money or receive grants. Tourism business can invest directly in the environment via www.lovethebroads.org.uk or join in with Green Tourism www.green-tourism.com.

6.2 **Farm businesses**- contact your local Catchment Sensitive Farming officer and Campaign for the Farmed Environment co-ordinator for advice on how to protect your soil resource, reduce nutrient and pesticide losses, improve wildlife and save money. Visit www.farmingfutures.org.uk for **suggested actions** for arable farmers to achieve financial and environmental benefits in relation to climate change. Visit www.leafuk.org for **six simple steps** for managing water quality and use on your land.

- 6.3 **Community** - join or establish a local river or beach care group; get in touch with your local rivers trust Norfolk Rivers Trust or River Waveney Trust; contact your local wildlife trust Norfolk Wildlife Trust or Suffolk Wildlife Trust and visit: www.savewatersavemoney.co.uk and <http://www.rhs.org.uk/science/gardening-in-a-changing-world>

7 Plan Dissemination and Publicity

- 7.1 The plan is available to download via the Broads Authority and Norfolk Rivers Trust websites (download [here](#)). It was launched on 19 June 2014 with a press release a week prior to this. The plan made front page of the Eastern Daily Press on Friday 13 June (view [here](#)) and also attracted an editorial comment entitled 'We must work together'.
- 7.2 The launch event, featured in the Eastern Daily Press on Friday 20 June (view [here](#)), was attended by 40 representatives from local organisations, businesses and community groups.
- 7.3 Partner organisations will also promote links and distribute hard copies via their community and business engagement activities. Hard copies and/or web links will be sent to: communities via Parish Councils; and farmers and rural businesses via the National Farmers Union and Country Land and Business Association Members' correspondence.

8 Future Funding

- 8.1 Sufficient funding from partners in 2013 and 2014 has been secured to employ the Catchment Partnership Officer, with associated budget, until March 2015.
- 8.2 Looking beyond April 2015, the delivery of the plan will require further external funding. Some funding options include continued partner funding, the Defra Catchment Restoration Fund, joint funding bids with Rivers Trust and other partners for European funding, such as Horizon 2020, Intereg or LIFE. Other funding opportunities may arise and will be facilitated by working with the Broads Authority Projects Manager and funding officers of partner organisations.

Background papers: None

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Broads Plan Objectives: CC4.2 (cross ref against BD3.1-3.3, BD4.1, AL2.1)

Appendices: None