

Paddy's Lane Boardwalk
Report by Director of Operations and Asset Officer

Summary: This report sets out the current situation in respect of paddy's Lane boardwalk, and suggests a compromise solution at paragraph 4.4. Members' views are sought on this approach.

1 Background

- 1.1 The Broads Authority adopted its Asset Management Strategy in July 2012. This Strategy ensures that the Authority's land, property and other assets are managed and maintained as effectively as possible.
- 1.2 Additionally, procedures have been strengthened to ensure that the Authority has a clear record of all its property dealings and the Authority has also disposed of a number of sites which no longer fulfil a strategic need.

2 Capital Asset Provision

- 2.1 As a first step in developing the Asset Management Plan, the Authority developed a Capital Asset Plan, and this was finally signed off by the Broads Authority on 17 January 2014. This reviewed and updated the previous existing arrangements which had been developed on an ad hoc basis in the past.
- 2.2 Financial provision has now been made for the renewal/ replacement of agreed assets in the 14/15 budget, but the Authority regretfully concluded that a number of countryside sites could no longer be supported given the financial constraints as they either no longer fulfilled a strategic need or could more properly be provided by third parties. Work has therefore been ongoing to determine exit strategies and dispose of those assets.

3 Paddy's Lane Boardwalk Current Position

- 3.1 One such site identified as a low priority as a Countryside asset is the Paddy's Lane boardwalk. The agreements related to this 104m of timber boardwalk which provides access between the 24hr moorings to the village of Barton Turf, were set up in September 2000.
- 3.2 In considering this site as a countryside asset, it has been reviewed against the Integrated Access Strategy criteria, and also discussed with the Broads Local Access Forum (BLAF). In conclusion the BLAF determined that the site is not a priority for retention in the Integrated Access Strategy as it does not

fulfil a strategic need, or score highly against the strategy's criteria for project prioritisation. In reaching this decision the BLAF felt that given the limitations on funding for the replacement of countryside asset structures, facilities such as the boardwalk linking the moorings at Woodbastwick and Cockshoot Dyke to the Norfolk Wildlife Trust bird hide at Cockshoot Broad should be given higher priority and the Paddy's Lane Boardwalk was therefore identified for disposal in the Asset Management Plan.

- 3.3 At the moorings workshop held in July 2014 this was noted, and a number of comments in support of retention of the site were received from boating organisations. A number of concerns were raised directly with the Authority from boaters, and from adjacent landowners, and it was agreed to discuss the future of the site with the landowner to see if alternative arrangements could be negotiated.
- 3.4 A proposal was put forward to pass the structure to the landowner with a commuted sum towards its future maintenance but whilst the offer was considered to be very helpful after much consideration it was felt by the landowner that this would not be sufficient to cover maintenance costs for, say, the next 10 years and so, in taking over responsibility, they would incur additional costs (as well as the public liability) which they are not in a position to sustain. They too are facing a very tight budgetary situation going forward and it was with regret that they had to decline the offer as it stands.
- 3.5 Notice has been provided by the Broads Authority to the landowner on 25 June 2014 to the landowners to terminate the current agreements as soon as practicable

4 Compromise Option

- 4.1 In the review of the Mooring Strategy a proposal was put forward to retain the Paddy's Lane 24hr moorings as 'wild' moorings, should the access be removed. The importance of the site for mooring is recognised, but as there are no longer any facilities in Barton Turf e.g. shop/ pub/refuse disposal and there are alternative moorings available at Barton Turf Staithe and Neatishead Staithe with village access, this seemed a prudent way forward with budgetary constraints.
- 4.2 However, members of the Navigation Committee were keen to see the access retained, and at the December meeting asked officers to review the situation and determine whether partnership arrangements could be negotiated. Subsequently the matter has been discussed with the Chairman of the BLAF again who confirmed that in his opinion, if the structure is to be maintained in the future, other sources of funding would have to be identified. However, he agreed that if the boardwalk is to be retained it would be appropriate to bring the structure up to good condition before transferring liability for it to navigation expenditure.
- 4.3 Taking into account the views expressed, and the likely long term economic situation for the National Park Grant it has to be recognised that essential

savings have to be made in future budgets. However, the grant for 2015/16 has now been confirmed as previously advised by Government which is good news.

- 4.4 It is therefore proposed that the site be brought into good condition using the current NPG budget available, but that thereafter be held as a Navigation asset, and future asset management budget provision be made as part of the navigation furniture contributions. This will require a new lease to be negotiated with the landowners.

Background papers:	None
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Broads Plan Objectives:	TR2
Appendices:	APPENDIX 1 – map

APPENDIX 1



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