

Navigation Committee

16 April 2026

Agenda item number 12

2025/26 Health and Safety Review and internal audit recommendations

Report by Head of Safety Management

Purpose

To present the annual review of marine incidents in 2025/26 and the recommended annual safety audit programme for 2026/27.

Broads Plan context

Broads Plan Theme C4 – Maintain and improve safety and security and user behaviours on the waterways.

1. Annual Marine Accidents

- 1.1. Appendix 1 gives details of the marine incidents reported from 1 April 2025 to 31 December 2025. Table 1 provides an analysis of deaths and injuries over a 28-year period and Table 2 an analysis of fires and explosions for a similar period. The data shows that 2025 saw relatively few marine accidents with just 1 boat related death and only 7 people reported as requiring hospital treatment. The latter being the lowest number for 20 years. The number of incidents involving fire and explosion were also low at just 2.
- 1.2. The Authority continues to highlight the importance of personal responsibility in safety publications. We continue to emphasise the importance of wearing a Personal Floatation Device (Buoyancy Aid or Life Jacket). Rangers have continued to educate boat users on key safety messaging at Super Safety Events and when observing issues whilst patrolling the waterways. Safety signage was significantly improved at Yarmouth Yacht Station in the early season of 2025, with clearer messaging on the need to wear lifejackets. Authority yacht station staff have feedback that more lifejackets were being worn by visitors to Great Yarmouth.
- 1.3. The Broads' gentle waterways continue to be a safe family environment. In 2025 there were 7 reported fatalities not related to boating.
- 1.4. The statistics included 3 reported non-boating-related drownings in Norwich.

- 1.5. Two fatalities occurred when 2 young males jumped into the water at different locations; one died at the scene, and the other died in the hospital. Another 2 were reported to us with no cause of death given, and again, the incident did not involve a boat.
- 1.6. One fatality report was a cardiac arrest death following a period of end-of-life care.
- 1.7. The only fatality relating to boating was of a powerboat helm at Oulton Broad. This occurred during a practice run when his race craft collided with a houseboat outside the circuit during a planned racing event on 24th July. East Suffolk Council are the lead investigatory body and continues to investigate this accident. Racing remains suspended until the outcome of the investigation and any recommendations are concluded.
- 1.8. There were 2 reported incidents of boat fires, one involving a petrol inboard motor fault and the other where an on-board LPG gas canister exploded and the owner sustained minor burns, which were treated in hospital.
- 1.9. From April to December 2025, there were 9 reported incidents of people inadvertently entering the water, compared to 14 incidents in 2024 over the same period, which represents an overall decrease of 5. Capsizing, falling in from a vessel whilst mooring or departing, and falling/jumping in from the bank/quay heading are the main areas represented in these figures.
- 1.10. The reported incidents remain low when considered against the high numbers of visitors who enjoy the waterways either by boating or by other means. The statistics include fatalities where people entered the water either accidentally or intentionally. Slips, trips and falls continue to be a significant factor that the Authority monitors after each occurrence. Some incidents are associated with swimming, and the Authority's messaging remains very clear about the significant dangers.
- 1.11. Of the fatalities in the report period, most are not directly attributable to boating. Of those who inadvertently entered the water, lifejackets were found in use in several incidents, and they are a major factor in some of those involved being able to get out and fully recover.
- 1.12. The Authority and our partners are continuing to reinforce the safety messaging on personal awareness, slow and steady speed on approach to moorings, use of provided grab rails, and wearing a life jacket when mooring and moving around a vessel.
- 1.13. The licensing of non-powered hire craft was introduced in 2023/24 and required operators to provide a formal handover and an 'in-water' trial to all hirers. Paddle sports continue to be popular in our waters and are an area where safety education is important; the Hire Boat Licensing Officer, Rangers and other front-line staff will continue to promote safety awareness in line with this during 2026.
- 1.14. The Hire Boat Licensing Officer carried out a series of annual 'Spot Checks' during the 2025 summer season to ensure that hire boat operators complied with the licensing

requirements and monitored handovers and ‘in-water’ trials. These seasonal checks are a vital safety audit feature and will continue in the 2026/27 season.

2. Annual internal safety audit programme 2025/26

2.1. The Head of Safety Management has identified three internal safety audits in Table 1 below to be carried out in the coming year. This programme is to ensure that the Broads Authority’s Safety Management System is working effectively and to introduce changes as deemed necessary to maintain and improve the current safety standards.

2.2. Table 1

Internal safety audit programme 2025/26

Internal Audit	Aims and Objectives
Broads Authority Premises.	To review and ensure that there is a consistent approach to premises management. To review methods for recording and documenting safety processes, such as Asbestos/Legionella and Fire Risk management.
Broads Authority Formal Safety Assessments.	Our formal safety assessments are reviewed every 3 years in line with our Safety Management System and compliance with the Port Marine Facilities Safety Code. As the designated person, the Head of Safety Management will lead the review process, which will involve stakeholders from the Boat Safety Management Group
Yacht Stations and sites which the public uses.	Safety Audits with special attention to public safety on sites to ensure standards and compliance are being met.

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[Broads Plan](#) strategic objectives: Broads Plan Theme C4 – Maintain and improve safety and security and user behaviours on the waterways.

Appendix 1 – Annual Safety Audit 1 April 2025 to 31 December 2025

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The reporting period is from 1 April 2025 to 31 December 2025. The report is limited to the Broads Authority’s area of marine responsibility. Notable incidents are listed below.

2025	Incident Details	Hazard Log Category
01/04/2025	Person fell into the River from The New Inn Horning- assessed by Ambulance	Falling in
07/04/2025	Female aboard W675 suffering a panic attack. Taken to Hospital	Medical Incident
22/04/2025	Minor injury from dog bite at OBYS. First aid treatment- reported to police	Injury
02/05/2025	Fallen in at Cox’s boatyard from vessel W386. Taken to Hosp	Falling In
14/05/2025	Female jumped from Lady Julian bridge Norwich. Recovered from the water by Rangers. Hosp by Ambulance	Falling in
18/05/2025	93-year-old male aboard vessel grey Goose suffered a broken ankle. Vessel moored Beccles Quay. Hosp by ambulance	Injury
20/05/2025	Male fallen in boarding a dingy at Hoveton Nature trail	Falling in
23/05/2025	Elderly female with suspected heart attack aboard tour boat Belle of the Broads	Medical incident
15/06/2025	2 adults and 1 child capsized from a hired canoe by Swans at NYS	Falling in.

15/06/2025	Fallen into river whilst attempting to moor at GYYS. No life jacket. No injury	Falling in
23/06/2025	70-year-old male extracted from vessel Brinks Concerto at Potter Heigham. Possible stroke	Medical incident
02/07/2025	14-year-old male jumped into river at Beccles. Failed to resurface. Deceased at Scene	Fatality
05/07/2025	Fell into river at Ranworth while refilling boat with water. No injuries	Falling in
25/07/2025	Male power boat pilot suffered fatal injuries after collision with houseboat	Fatality
05/08/2025	23-year-old male recovered from the water at Horstead Mill. Taken to hospital later declared deceased	Fatality
12/08/2025	Gas canister fire aboard vessel 1615Y at Sutton staithe. Minor burns sustained to boat owner	Fire
14/08/2025	Male fallen from hire craft whilst mooring at GYYS. Injury to chin requiring 14 stitches. Returned to vessel	injury
29/08/2025	Body of a male recovered by Police from River Wensum near NYS	Fatality
30/09/2025	36 -Year-old male – cardiac arrest aboard vessel Blue Panda. Expected death - end of life care	Fatality
02/09/2025	Vessel Fire at Bureside Holiday Park	Fire
05/09/2025	Person fell into river near Norwich Yacht Station	Falling in

14/09/2025	Hire boat aground river Bure. Taking on water- evacuation of crew	Grounding
21/09/2025	Fell into river at GYYs from hire cruiser. Not wearing life jacket- Person recovered safely	Falling in
13/10/2025	Elderly male fallen into the river at Ranworth whilst filling Hire Cruiser with Water	Falling in
11/11/2025	Male recovered from the river at Norwich riverside, by Police. Deceased	Fatality
20/12/2025	Male pulled from River Wensum nr St James Quay Norwich, later died in hosp. Poss Suicide	Fatality

Table 1 - Analysis of Death/Injuries Since 1998

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Death																												
No of deaths on or from boats	3	2	1	3	2	6	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	4	2	0	2	1	5	1	2	1	5	3	0	3	3	1
Reported deaths not related to boating	1	4	4	2	3	1	0	7	2	1	1	3	3	3	8	2	5	4	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	4	7
Cause of death																												
Severe injury	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1
Heart Attack	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	2	1	5	0	1	1	3	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	2	0
Drowning	4	5	1	3	3	5	0	4	3	0	0	0	1	3	2	0	5	3	0	0	3	2	3	0	0	1	4	4
Asphyxiation/CO poisoning	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Terminal Illness														1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
Not Known	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	3	0	1	0	1	2	2	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	1
Reports of people inadvertently entering in the water See footnote.	8	2	5	1	4	15	16	12	23	29	17	34	20	17	18	12	22	19	21	12	23	17	27	24	11	9	14	11
No of persons reported as requiring hospital treatment	7	9	8	7	7	18	2	4	13	12	11	22	30	17	15	19	14	13	30	36	49	33	35	35	19	15	19	7
Head	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	5	3	3	1	3	3	0	2	7	3	4	5	3	1	4	3	4	1
Arm/hand	0	0	1	3	1	1	1	0	1	6	4	1	4	4	2	4	1	0	3	4	6	7	5	2	5	3		0

Leg/foot	2	4	1	2	2	2	2	1	3	7	5	7	8	3	6	4	3	4	9	8	8	11	9	12	6	3	3	2
Torso, ribs, chest, back	0	1	4	1	1	2	0	1	4	3	0	2	4	2	0	2	2	2	1	5	8	2	2	6	1	1	1	0
Not described	0	0	0	0	0	10	2	1	4	0	0	8	10	2	2	5	1	4	6	12	13	8	10	10	3	3	11	2
Asphyxiated/CO poisoning	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Burns/Scalds	4	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	2	1		1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	1
Heart attack														3	5	1	2	1	5	3	10	0	4	2	0	3	0	1

Footnote: Reports where someone inadvertently found themselves in the water. It does not include capsizes of sailing dinghies etc, or from any other contact water sports where entry into the water is predictable.

Table 2 - Analysis of Fire and Explosions Since 1999

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of incidents	6	3	4	2	2	0	2	22	8	4	4	3	3	1	1	1	0	2	2	5	1	2	4	0	3	2	2
Vessels involved (Private)	3	2	2	2	1	0	1	18	10	4	2	2	2	1	1	3	0	1	2	5	1	2	3	0	3	4	2
Vessels involved (Hire)	3	1	2	0	1	0	1	4	1	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Prime cause LPG	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Prime cause Petrol	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Prime cause Electrical	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
Prime cause Other	5	1	2	0	0	0	1	21	4	2	2	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	2	3	1	2	3	0	2	0	0
No of vessels total loss	1	2	2	2	0	0	0	20	6	2	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	3	4	0
No of injuries from fires requiring hospital treatment	1	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	1
No of fatalities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0