

Mooring Strategy Update 2017
Report by Director of Operations

Summary: This report provides members with an update on the Authority's mooring strategy and the action plan to maintain the Authority's moorings that was adopted by the Broads Authority in November 2014.

1 Background

- 1.1 The Broads Authority originally published a mooring strategy in 2006 at which time the Authority provided 5,969m of moorings. The need for a strategy to guide the provision of Broads Authority free 24-hour moorings was identified as a priority in the best value review of navigation and supported through the public consultation for the Broads Plan 2004. The original strategy was developed with the guidance of a steering group formed of Broads Authority members and wider consultation was undertaken with a formal consultation group which included representatives from the Authority's partners and stakeholders.
- 1.2 The 2006 strategy was reviewed in 2009 and in 2013 the Authority adopted an Integrated Access Strategy (IAS) for the Broads which sought to make improvements to the connectivity and use of access facilities on both land and water. The overarching objective of the mooring strategy: *"to maintain as a minimum the present number of moorings available for visitor use"* and the other principles of the mooring strategy were carried forward into the IAS. Appendix 1 sets out these principles.
- 1.3 The adoption of the Mooring Strategy in 2006 and the IAS in 2013 has resulted in a significant increase in the length of moorings the Authority provides. Currently the Authority provides 7,535m of visitor and demasting moorings over 63 sites. They are listed in a table in Appendix 2.
- 1.4 The consequence of this is that the Authority's asset management liabilities have also increased considerably. In response to this fact the Authority produced an asset management strategy in January 2014 for the future management and maintenance of all its assets.
- 1.5 Since then the Authority has reviewed the Asset Management Strategy and also reviewed the level of mooring provision that it is appropriate for the Authority to continue to provide. This review was informed by a member workshop which concluded that, if possible, the Authority should continue to maintain a policy of no net reduction in mooring length although a number of sites were identified by the workshop as not being a high priority to maintain

or repile. Two of these sites were Thorpe River Green and a section of the Hoveton Viaduct moorings. The Authority has given notice in respect of Thorpe River Green (January 2017), and agreed Heads of Terms for the lease at Hoveton Viaduct (March 2017).

- 1.6 It should be noted that while there was some appetite for trying to increase the number of free moorings provided by the Authority the mooring workshop recommended that the Authority should not seek to take on new mooring sites if the acquisition of those sites would result in an increase in its piling responsibilities. However, members did consider that the Authority should consider acquiring sites if there was no piling liability connected to them. Subsequently the Navigation Committee was consulted on an action plan for the maintenance of the Authority's mooring assets and the action plan was adopted by the Broads Authority at its meeting on the 21 November 2014. Additionally an annual budget of £150,000 was allocated to cover the costs of maintaining the Authority's piled assets into the future.
- 1.7 In October 2015 the Navigation Committee also considered a report on demasting mooring provision and identified that the high priority sites for demasting mooring provision were at St Olave's Bridge, Ludham Bridge and Acle Bridge. However the Committee did not recommend that budget should be allocated to provide facilities at these sites.

2 Review of the Asset Management Action Plan for Piled Sites

- 2.1 The Navigation Committee has given officers unequivocal advice that the Authority should not consider entering leases for mooring sites that require the payment of annual fees higher than those recommended by our property advisers. This advice is informing our lease negotiations and unfortunately has already resulted in the loss of the 24-hour moorings at Aldeby, Woodbastwick and Percis Island, Horning. Additionally a number of sites are currently, or will shortly be, subject to lease negotiations and the Committee recognised that the continued inclusion of these sites in the action plan was dependent on the successful renegotiation of those leases. The action plan was therefore reviewed by the Navigation Committee in December 2015 and the revised 10 year repiling programme that was supported at that meeting is shown in Appendix 3.
- 2.2 Another factor that has the potential to affect the repiling programme is that the Environment Agency (EA) is currently seeking to pass on liability for piling that is no longer required for flood defence purposes to the owners of the land behind the piling frontage. This has formed a major part of the discussions with the landowner at Thurne Mouth.
- 2.3 Clearly this means that the Authority needs to ensure that its Asset Management Plan is able to adapt to changing circumstances. Officers will therefore annually review the proposed repiling programme to take account of the outcome of the various lease negotiations, the EA's proposals, changes in contractor costs and prices for steel and materials.

3 Provision of New Moorings

- 3.1 As mentioned in paragraph 1.5, previous advice from members was that, while the Authority should attempt to increase the number of moorings it provides, it should not seek to acquire sites for the development of new moorings that would add to its asset management liabilities. In practice this means that only piled sites where the piling will remain the responsibility of the landowner can be considered for the development of new moorings.
- 3.2 But it should also be recognised that if sites are lost because of lease issues the Authority may also lose the responsibility for repiling those sites. This does give some potential for taking on new sites that come with repiling responsibilities but only if they replace any lost sites on a like for like basis. The difficulty is that in many cases officers will not know the outcome of lease negotiations for some time and therefore this assessment can only be carried out on a case by case basis as lease negotiations are concluded.
- 3.3 Having considered potential sites, officers have initially identified two possible locations for the development of new moorings which would give the Authority no additional piling maintenance liability while meeting the aims of the IAS. These are at Rockland Short Dyke and Berney Arms. In the case of Rockland the location is in an area with limited mooring availability and the development of a mooring in this location would also be in accordance with one of the key objectives of the Broads Sustainable Tourism Strategy which states:

“Spreading benefits to all parts of the Broads: A number of parts of the Broads experience visitor congestion at certain times while others are under-visited. The imbalance between the northern and southern Broads should continue to be addressed.”

Providing new facilities like moorings in the southern rivers is essential if this aim is to be realised. As regards to Berney Arms, if a greater length of mooring were to be managed by the Broads Authority it would allow for the site to be managed to ensure that moorings are available for vessels waiting to cross Breydon Water. Lease negotiations for these sites are progressing well and if leases are successfully completed construction works at both sites will be programmed as soon as possible.

- 3.4 Other major mooring works have been completed to safety moorings on land purchased by the Authority at Scare Gap on the lower Bure, emergency mooring pontoons at Mautby and the complete refurbishment of the 24-hour moorings at Somerleyton. Also works have been completed on demasting moorings both upstream and downstream of the Haddiscoe Cut Bridge at St Olave’s through a Section 106 Agreement with the landowner.

4 Mooring Maintenance and Repair

- 4.1 Aside from work on new moorings the Authority continues to carry out an ambitious programme of mooring and piling maintenance and repair works throughout the river system. Repairs are carried out to timber capping, mooring posts, path surfacing, timber piles and safety features at all the

Authority's moorings on a regular basis to ensure that the sites are safe for public use. Major projects are also carried out like the replacement of Turntide Jetty at the confluence of the Rivers Waveney and Yare which was completed last year at a cost of £357,000.

5. Principle of Free 24 Hour Moorings

- 5.1 One of the key principles of the Moorings Strategy has been to "Maintain free use of Broads Authority unmanned moorings". Currently the Authority only charges for mooring at the two Yacht Stations at Norwich and Great Yarmouth which have Broads Authority staff in attendance and provide services such as showers and toilets.
- 5.2 This issue has been debated at length by the Navigation Committee in recent years: in 2006 when the Mooring Strategy was first adopted, in 2009 when the Strategy was reviewed, in 2013 when the Integrated Access Strategy was adopted and at the moorings workshop in November 2014. It has also been debated in relation to two specific sites, Ranworth and Reedham. On every occasion the Committee and the Authority has supported the current policy.
- 5.3 The officer view is that the current policy is the right one for the following reasons:
- (i) For most sites the cost of collecting mooring fees is likely to be outweighed by the costs of collection;
 - (ii) It could be seen as a deterrent to visitors to the Broads who have already paid significant amounts for the hire of a boat;
 - (iii) Private boat owners will quite correctly think that their toll should cover the cost of the provision and maintenance of moorings;
 - (iv) Landowners are likely to demand higher rents for the leasing of mooring sites if the Authority is levying a charge.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 This report identifies that the Authority is working hard to maintain its moorings and also seeking opportunities to increase mooring provision in accordance with the principles of the Mooring Strategy and Integrated Access Strategy. It emphasises that officers are regularly reviewing the action plan for maintaining the Authority's assets and following members' advice regarding the need to continue to provide free moorings and not take on piling liabilities unnecessarily. Comments on the report from Members of the Forum are welcomed.

Background papers: Nil

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Broads Plan Objectives: NA5, TR2

Appendices: APPENDIX 1 - Principles of 2006/9 Mooring Strategies
APPENDIX 2 - List of Broads Authority Moorings

Mooring Strategy Update

Principles of 2006/9 Mooring Strategies

- Distribution of moorings – maximum 30 minutes cruising time between sites (“90 minutes for Country Park” moorings).
- Distribution of mooring types - Wild 21%, Rural 36%, Urban 4% Country Park 37%, Flagship 2%.
- Maintain free use of Broads Authority unmanned moorings.
- Protect and enhance existing sites/facilities including working in partnership regarding third party provision.
- Seek contributions/ establish charges for ancillary services e.g. water/ Ranger etc.
- Promote double alongside mooring at appropriate sites and review effectiveness of national schemes.
- Encourage sustainable development of boating and associated infrastructure to be consistent with Water Framework Directive (WFD) and planning policies.
- Ensure sites have no negative impact in environmentally sensitive localities.
- Encourage innovative mooring design to provide habitat opportunities and mitigate landscape impacts.
- Improve the dissemination of information to users, to include location of sites, facilities available and consider a Moorings Code to refer to behaviour.
- Mitigate user conflict through design and alternative provision, i.e. relocate angling to adjacent facilities.
- Strategy to be linked to Broads Flood Alleviation Project, Electric Charging Point strategy, angling strategy, slipway strategy and water related sport and recreation strategy (**now the Integrated Access Strategy**) to consider and encourage partnership development/ funding opportunities.
- Undertake Byelaw enforcement to discourage misuse.

Appendix 2

Broads Authority Moorings, Yacht Stations & Demastings

1	Aldeby (<i>unavailable March 2017</i>)	37	North Cove
2	Barton Turf	38	Norwich Yacht Station
3	Beccles South	39	Paddy's Lane Barton
4	Beccles North Bank	40	Polkey's Mill, River Yare
5	Belaugh Staithe	41	Postwick Wharf
6	Berney Arms Reach	42	Potter Heigham Bridge Green
7	Bramerton	43	Potter Heigham Demasting
8	Brundall Church Fen	44	Potter Heigham Dinghy Park
9	Burgh Castle	45	Potter Heigham Martham Bank
10	Cantley, RSPB Moorings	46	Potter Heigham Repps Bank
11	Catfield Staithe	47	Potter Heigham Staithe
12	Chedgrave	48	Ranworth
13	Cockshoot	49	Rockland St Mary Staithe
14	Coltishall Common	50	Scare Gap, Acle
15	Commissioners Cut	51	Somerleyton
16	Deep Dyke	52	St Benet's Abbey
17	Deep Go Dyke	53	St Olaves
18	Dilham Staithe	54	Stokesby
19	Dutch Tea Gardens, Oulton Dyke	55	Sutton Staithe
20	Gaye's Staithe	56	Wayford Bridge
21	Geldeston	57	West Somerton
22	Great Yarmouth Yacht Station	58	White Slea
23	Haddiscoe Demasting	59	Whitlingham Country Park
24	Hardley Cross	60	Womack Dyke
25	Herringfleet	61	Womack Island
26	Horning Marshes	62	Worlingham
27	Horning Staithe	63	Wroxham Island
28	Hoveton St John		
29	Hoveton Viaduct		
30	How Hill Staithe		
31	Irstead Staithe		
32	Langley Dyke		
33	Loddon Staithe		
34	Ludham Bridge de-masting		
35	Mutford Lock demasting		
36	Neatishead		