

Broads Authority

15 March 2024

Agenda item number 7

Summary of actions and outstanding issues following discussions at previous meetings

Title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Summary of actions	Progress so far	Target date
Wherryman's Way footpath on River Chet	26/07/2019	Rob Rogers	Wherryman's Way footpath by River Chet included in priority actions for new Waterways and Recreation Officer. Discussions ongoing with Norfolk County Council.	<p>July 23: The Community Infrastructure Levy funding application was unsuccessful. The project team are scoping options for proceeding with the £216,000 currently available from the previous funding application. Norfolk County Council (NCC) are meeting with GNGB to establish the feasibility of a reapplication for funding. NCC are also actively looking for alternative funding to support the project.</p> <p>At the Hardley Flood site - there are three major ecological considerations (European protected species)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Otters by footpath line - commissioned consultant to report. 2. Water vole -a Norfolk Biodiversity Info report has been requested. 3. Desmoulin's Whorl Snails – very specialist species – awaiting report. <p>Once the ecological reports are completed talks will be held with Natural England regarding next steps. NCC have met with NP Law for advice on statutory duties and legislation for priority for Public Rights of Way or Ecology.</p> <p>At the Bramerton Site – the Broads Authority are working with engineering consultants on a gabion basket and rock roll design for the bank restoration.</p> <p>November 2023: Work still ongoing and habitat assessments are being carried out.</p> <p>January 2024: The 11 January meeting of the Wherryman's Way stakeholder group was cancelled as there were no new updates, but:</p>	31/12/2021

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardley Flood planning application is being prepared by NCC and it is hope it will be submitted by the end of January 2024. • Bramerton Planning Application is being finalised by NCC and again it is hoped it will be submitted late January 2024. <p>If both applications are sucessful the partnership work was expected to be completed by May 2024.</p> <p>February 2024: Planning permisson (BA2024/0053/FUL) has been granted to make repairs to two footbridges and access ramps on footpath 4, south-west of Hardley Flood. The work has been delayed due to the bird breeding season and will commence in the autumn, subject to funding being available.</p>	
Responding to Climate Change Emergency	27/09/2019	John Packman	<p>To adopt Climate Change Emergency Statement for the Broads (first report Appendix 1) and principles outlined for BA to:</p> <p>Recognise climate emergency</p> <p>Work toward making the Broads Authority 'carbon neutral' by 2030, with further objective of reducing all carbon emissions to zero by 2040.</p> <p>Establish base line for CO2 emissions using a common methodology with NPAs and develop an Action Plan and Monitoring system.</p> <p>Work with constituent local authorities to reduce emissions from domestic, travel and other sources in the Broads across the two counties.</p> <p>Work with farmers, land managers, NFU and Defra to influence land management practices, to maintain and build organic matter and carbon in soil, improve biodiversity and store water to protect against flooding and drought.</p> <p>Work with boating and tourism organisations to continue promoting and developing environmentally friendly boating and sustainable tourism; and</p> <p>Aspire to offsetting carbon emissions locally within the Broads by a Broads offsetting scheme.</p>	<p>13 September 2022: A member workshop was held on 25 July, and the full report circulated to members. Work is ongoing on the next steps, with a report anticipated for the November Authority meeting.</p> <p>The next phase of Clean Maritime funding, which may allow us to build on the Electrifying the Broads feasibility study, is expected to be announced on 22 September.</p> <p>November 2022: We are working on various possible bids for external funding to support our climate change work, including the Norfolk Investment Framework.</p> <p>Unfortunately the Clean Maritime Competition Phase III was not suitable for the Electrifying the Broads project, so we are exploring other avenues.</p> <p>December 2022: An update report setting out next steps was presented to the Authority Meeting in December. We will hear in early January the outcome of the bids to the Pioneer Places fund and the Norfolk Investment Framework.</p> <p>February 2023: Pioneer Places bid was not awarded. We have a new possibility of funding through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund award, in partnership with Norfolk County Council, that includes funding for electric pillars in the Broads.</p> <p>June 2023: We have had discussions with the Canal & Rivers Trust and Environment Agency to see what joint work can be done on boating electrification. Round 4 of the</p>	

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				<p>Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition is expected to open in July 2023, we will reach out to partners to determine if we can submit a bid. We are drafting a tender for the installation of solar panels at the Dockyard. We have launched a consultation with Visit The Broads members to identify opportunities to use funding from the Norfolk investment Framework to support sustainable tourism.</p> <p>September 2023: We are continuing to work with Norfolk County Council on developing a bid under the Norfolk Investment Framework for Sustainable tourism. Unfortunately the Clean Maritime Demonstration Competititon Round 4 has not proved suitable for the Electrifying the Broads project as it does not allow for capital expenditure. The Dockyard solar tender is currently open and will close on 15 September.</p> <p>February 2024: No further progress.</p>	
'Broads Peat' - A Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme project	23/07/2021	Andrea Kelly	<p>The Broads Peat Project was awarded £785,668 in December 2021 from Defra, as part of the Nature for Climate Peatland Grants Scheme – Discovery Grant which is administered by Natural England. The project budget was revised to £855,831 in December 2022 (the formal Change Control Notice was received from Natural England on 3 January). The project budget was revised to £1,125,831 in April 2023 (the formal Change Control Notice was received from Natural England on 20 April 2023).</p> <p>Broads Peat was initially expected to close in March 2023 - an extension until 31 August 2023 has been granted. Following the Discovery phase, a restoration grant was awarded for Buttle Marsh on 26 August 2023.</p>	<p>Early March 2023: Submission of ~£400k Paludiculture Exploration Fund bid with Norfolk FWAG, Norfolk County Council, NUA, Wetland Products Foundation and Hudson Architects. with support from EA, Broads IDB, Fenland Soil.</p> <p>April 2023: The peat project extension to 31 August was approved, with a revised budget of £1,125,831; the formal Change Control Notice was received from Natural England on 20 April 2023. A restoration bid is being prepared for Buttle Marsh, and discussions have taken place for other sites. Field-by-field assessment of carbon emissions in the Broads was presented to the Lowland Peatland Conference in Ely17-18 April. SWT secondment ended at the end of March. The Carbon Reduction Project Manager is providing additional support to the project.</p> <p>June 2023: The restoration bid was submitted for Buttle Marsh. Paludiculture Exploration Fund project 'FibreBroads' successful, led by Broads Authority, with Norfolk FWAG, Norfolk County Council, NUA, Wetland Products Foundation and Hudson Architects. with support from EA, Broads IDB, Fenland Soil.</p> <p>September 2023: The Broads Peat Discovery project closed at the end of August, and preparation for the final reporting is underway. The Nature for Climate Peatland</p>	31/03/2023

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				<p>Restoration Grant has been awarded to Buttle Marsh in August 2023, with co-funding secured from Anglian Water. Peatlands set to be restored to help tackle climate change - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>The other Nature for Climate partnership project led by the Broads Authority, 'FibreBroads', ~£500 funded by the Paludiculture Exploration Fund has also started. New investment in peat in fight against climate change - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) It hosted Minister Pow on 11 & 12 August. Minister Spencer visited the FibreBroads stand at the Royal Norfolk Show. The project featured in eight media articles since the launch of the project in June 2023.</p> <p>November 2023: Reporting on Broads Peat Project complete.</p> <p>Buttle Marsh Peat Restoration project is securing permissions for water transfer, eels, planning and water voles and reviewing project costs for delivery in 2024, subject to permissions.</p> <p>FibreBroads, a partnership led by the Broads Authority to grow wetland crops, engage with farmers, regulators and fibre product developers is on track. Wetland plants are growing well and many wading birds benefit from the shallow water and damp conditions. Farmer one to ones and workshops in planning stage and 50 NUA students engaged in product awareness.</p> <p>Two further Nature for Climate partnership bids involving the Broads Authority totalling ~£260k have been applied for focusing on water management and farmer collaboration.</p> <p>January 2024: Buttle Marsh Peat Restoration project gained planning permission and continues work on securing permissions for water transfer, eels and water voles and reviewing project costs to add in a water storage reservoir for delivery in 2024, subject to permissions. Discussing new wind pump design to comply with eel regulations.</p> <p>FibreBroads remains on track. Presented at Defra lowland agriculture workshop in December and hosted the Defra Peat Team. Presenting at January Paludiculture Conference in Manchester. Planning novel acoustic monitoring of wading birds at wetland demonstration site. 12 Farmer one</p>	

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				<p>to ones completed and farm adviser workshops in planning stage. Fenland Soil farmers are visiting the Broads for a Farmer's Dialogue visit to the Wet Farming Trials at Horsey on 16 January 2024. Wetland plants are growing well. Awaiting notification of the two further Nature for Climate partnership bids involving the Broads Authority totalling ~£260k have been applied for focusing on water management and farmer collaboration.</p> <p>February 2024: Buttle Marsh Peat Restoration project continues work on securing permissions for water transfer, eels and water voles and designing water storage reservoir for delivery in 2024, subject to permissions.</p> <p>FibreBroads remains on track.</p> <p>Presented at Norfolk Show and hosted Fenland Soil Farmers as well as preparing to host partners from the Great Fen in April.</p> <p>Novel wildlife acoustic monitoring will be set out in March at wetland demonstration site, which is also being adjusted to optimise water filtration. The project team are putting on a farm advisers training day for peat restoration and green finance.</p> <p>Hudsons Architects are presenting at Future Build.</p> <p>Secured two further Nature for Climate: Lowland Agricultural Peat partnership grants involving the Broads Authority totalling ~£260k focusing on water management and farmer collaboration.</p>	
Recommendations from external review into formal complaint	20/01/2023	John Packman	<p>At the Broads Authority meeting on 20 January 2023, it was resolved to:</p> <p>i. Welcome the findings and recommendations of the independent investigation into the formal complaint and in particular that:</p> <p>“In our view officers acted in good faith and professionally throughout”, and that</p> <p>a. The Broads Authority’s governance arrangements are regularly reviewed by Internal and External Audit, both external to the organisation... There is continuous improvement underway within the realm of governance.</p> <p>b. “any suggestion that there are significant fundamental problems at the Authority and that it is "failing" or similar would be completely incorrect.”</p>	<p>16 Feb 2023: All recommendations were adopted by members at the BA meeting on 20 Jan. The report was published on the website on 20 January (rec. vi). A report will be presented to the Audit & Risk Committee on 14 March, to agree a set of actions to implement the recommendations and the relevant timetable. In addition, to delegate authority to the CE and MO to take all and necessary steps to implement the recommendations and report back to the ARC on progress.</p> <p>April 2023: The Audit & Risk Committee agreed the actions and timetable on 14 March. The Senior Governance Officer and Director of Finance subsequently met with the MO and DMO to draw up an action plan on implementing the recommendations, including timescales for presenting draft</p>	22/12/2023

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			<p>ii. In accordance with recommendation a. above and recognising the Authority's designation as a Best Value Authority it adopts in full the recommendations of the independent review for improvements in the organisation's governance and procedures as set out in Table 1.</p> <p>iii. Refers the recommendations of the VWV report to the Audit and Risk Committee for detailed consideration and implementation.</p> <p>iv. The Authority recognises the serious impact this process has had upon its officers' well-being and, while implementing the practical steps in the recommendations, recognises the duty to officers as their employer and commits to protecting its officers in future from unfounded allegations.</p> <p>v. Thank: the Task and Finish Group for its work which has been concluded and its views incorporated into the VWV report; VWV for their independent review and Defra for meeting the costs.</p> <p>vi. To publish the VWV report on the Authority's website (subject to one redaction of personal information).</p>	<p>documents to the relevant committee and full Authority for review and approval. Progress will be reported to the next ARC meeting in July.</p> <p>July 2023: Reports to Planning Committee 21/7 and Audit & Risk Committee 25/7 seeking the committees' views on proposals to implement two of the recommendations, for decision at this Authority meeting. The report to ARC also included progress against the timetable on implementing all of the recommendations.</p> <p>September 2023: Report on the establishment of a Standards Committee for decision at this Authority meeting.</p> <p>At its meeting on 28 July, the Authority adopted revised ToR for the Audit and Risk Committee (and renamed it the Risk, Audit and Governance Committee), and approved changes to the Scheme of powers delegated to the Chief Executive and other officers, and the Code of Practice for members of the Planning Committee and officers (specifically relating to the "call-in" process for planning applications).</p> <p>A minor change to the wording for complaints about unlawful behaviour or action was approved by Management Team on 22 August.</p> <p>November 2023: At its meeting on 22 September, the Authority agreed to appoint a Standards Committee and adopted a Monitoring Officer Protocol. In accordance with the agreed procedure, Members were invited to submit an expression of interest and the following have been appointed: Harry Blathwayt; Stephen Bolt; Paul Hayden; Peter Dixon and Michael Scott.</p> <p>January 2024: All 9 recommendations have been completed and implemented with the exception of no. 6 (member appointments) which requires a decision by Defra, as part of the ongoing Landscape Review.</p> <p>February 2024: Assurance Review of Corporate Governance and Risk Management by Internal Audit achieves top score of 'Substantial Assurance'.</p> <p>Item complete.</p>	

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Reduction in office space at Yare House	28/07/2023	Emma Krelle	Reduce occupation to cut overhead costs and reduce carbon emissions.	<p>September 2023: Revised plans for reduced occupation submitted for landlord approval.</p> <p>October 2023: Plans approved by landlord. Prequalification stage of works tender complete with tender packs being finalised to be issued in November.</p> <p>November 2023: Tenders issued on 8 November 2023 and the closing date was 15 December 2023. It is hoped that the work will start early in the New Year.</p> <p>January 2024: Tender responses reviewed 15 December and we are in the final stages of finalising our preferred contractor. Building Control Plans have been submitted with the view to the new lease being agreed and works commencing last week of January.</p> <p>February 2024: Delays in January with responses from the Landlord means the lease is still not agreed. The Authority's solicitor is helping to move along outstanding queries for the lease to be agreed as soon as possible.</p>	
Funding the waterways of the Broads National Park	26/01/2024	John Packman	To track the progress on making the case for central Government funding to support the maintenance of the Broads waterways.	<p>January 2024: The Board unanimously endorsed the paper and supported the Chair in writing to the Secretary of State for the Environment.</p> <p>February 2024: Chair has written to the Minister and local MPs.</p>	
Appeal under S31 Harbours Act 1964		John Packman	Broads Hire Boat Federation lodged an appeal with the Department for Transport on 11 October 2023, 10 months after Broads Authority decision in January 2023 regarding navigation charges for 2023/24.	<p>22 November 2023: Broads Hire Boat Federation published notice in Eastern Daily Press.</p> <p>23 February 2024: Broads Authority submitted response.</p> <p>March 2024: Decision by Department for Transport expected.</p>	

Date of report: 29 February 2024