

# Broads Local Access Forum

## Agenda 30 August 2023

2.00pm

Hoveton Village Hall Stalham Road Hoveton Norwich NR12 8DU

### Introduction

1. **Appointment of Chair**
2. **Appointment of Vice Chair**
3. Apologies for absence and welcome
4. Declarations of interest
5. **To receive and confirm the minutes of the Broads Local Access Forum meeting held on 7 June 2023** (Pages 5-12)
6. **Summary of actions and outstanding issues following decisions at previous meetings- to note the schedule** (Pages 13-15)

### Items for discussion

7. **Integrated Access Strategy: projects update** (Pages 16-19)  
Report by Head of Construction, Maintenance and Ecology
8. **Integrated Access Strategy: scoping paper** (Pages 20-28)  
Report by Head of Construction, Maintenance and Ecology
9. **Project update from Norfolk County Council**  
Written update by Matt Hayward

### Other matters

10. Any other business
11. To note the date of the next meeting – **Wednesday 29 November 2023** at 10.00am.

# Broads Local Access Forum membership

Member	Address	Phone number	Email	Interest
Linda Aspland	Quercus 229 Norwich Road Wroxham NR12 8SL	01603 951814	<a href="mailto:linda.aspland@icloud.com">linda.aspland@icloud.com</a>	Waterborne recreational users / Paddle sports
Richard Atkins	Riverview Cottage Off Church Lane Surlingham NR14 7DF	01508 538083	<a href="mailto:richard.p.atkins@btinternet.com">richard.p.atkins@btinternet.com</a>	Paddle sports/ Walking
Keith Bacon	Woodcroft Wood Street Catfield NR29 5DF	01692 581314	<a href="mailto:keithbacon@keme.co.uk">keithbacon@keme.co.uk</a> <a href="mailto:keithbacon@broadland.net">keithbacon@broadland.net</a>	Archaeology and landscape heritage
Harry Blathwayt	20 Broad Reaches Ludham NR29 5PD	01692 678644	<a href="mailto:Harry.blathwayt@norfolk.gov.uk">Harry.blathwayt@norfolk.gov.uk</a>	Broads Authority
Christine Cane	The Roundhouse 160 Tuttle Lane West Wymondham NR18 0JJ	01953 606019	<a href="mailto:christine.cane@bhsvolunteer.org.uk">christine.cane@bhsvolunteer.org.uk</a>	Equestrian riding and driving
Peter Dixon	The Smea Hickling NR12 0YL	078509 30486	<a href="mailto:Peterjbdixon@hotmail.com">Peterjbdixon@hotmail.com</a>	Broads Authority
Tony Gibbons	19 Blithewood Gardens Sprowston NR7 8PS	01603 400973	<a href="mailto:tonygibbons.ndaa@gmail.com">tonygibbons.ndaa@gmail.com</a>	Angling
Tim Harris	Catfield Hall Catfield NR29 5DB	01692 580220	<a href="mailto:tim@catfieldhall.com">tim@catfieldhall.com</a>	Nature conservation / Archaeology and landscape heritage
Alison Holden-Standley	Homestead Beach Road Sea Palling	01692 598609	<a href="mailto:AlisonStandley@gmail.com">AlisonStandley@gmail.com</a>	People with Disabilities/Access for all
Duncan Holmes	127 Lower Street Salhouse Norfolk NR13 6RX	0739356 6749	<a href="mailto:duncanholmes123@hotmail.com">duncanholmes123@hotmail.com</a>	Waterborne Recreation/angling

Member	Address	Phone number	Email	Interest
Kate Leonard	c/o Broads Authority Yare House 62-64 Thorpe House Norwich NR1 1RY	01603 610734	<a href="mailto:mk.leonard@btinternet.com">mk.leonard@btinternet.com</a>	Walking/ waterborne recreation
David Lilley	26 Burnt Hill Way Oulton Broad Lowestoft Suffolk NR33 8PF	0773824 4595	<a href="mailto:lilleyd@live.co.uk">lilleyd@live.co.uk</a>	Angling/walking
Peter Mason	7 Brick Kiln Gardens Catfield Gt Yarmouth NR29 5DW	01692 583152	<a href="mailto:peter.mason51@sky.com">peter.mason51@sky.com</a>	Walking/Tourism and local business
Joe Mitchell	TBC	TBC	TBC	Landowners and managers/ nature conservation
Steve Read	The Anchorage Broadview Road Oulton Broad Lowestoft NR32 3PL	07720 808715	<a href="mailto:stevereadcon@btinternet.com">stevereadcon@btinternet.com</a>	Walking/water borne recreational users
Martin Rendle	62 South Hill Road Norwich NR7 0NG	01603 339133	<a href="mailto:adventure@norfolkoutdoor.co.uk">adventure@norfolkoutdoor.co.uk</a>	Paddle sports/Tourism and local business
Deborah Wicks	TBC	TBC	TBC	People with disabilities/Access for all/ Educational establishments
Christopher Yardley	Larkhill Cottage Priory Lane Ingworth NR116PG	01263 479691	<a href="mailto:Cj.yardley@tiscali.co.uk">Cj.yardley@tiscali.co.uk</a>	Waterborne recreational users/ nature conservation

**Kylie Moos – Broads Local Access Forum Secretary**  
Yare House, 62-64 Thorpe Road, Norwich, NR1 1RY

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# Broads Local Access Forum

## Minutes of the meeting held on 07 June 2023

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## Present

Keith Bacon – in the Chair, Richard Atkins, Peter Dixon, Peter Mason, Steve Read, Christopher Yardley.

## In attendance

Dan Hoare – Head of Construction, Maintenance and Ecology, Kylie Moos – Administrative Officer, Andrew Walters – Waterways and Recreation Officer. Ken Hawkins– Norfolk Local Access Forum, Ruth Bradshaw- Campaign for National Parks.

## 1. Apologies for absence and welcome

**Apologies** received from Linda Aspland, Harry Blathwayt, Tony Gibbons, Tim Harris, Alison Holden-Standley, Michael Scott.

## 2. Declarations of interest

Members indicated they had no further declarations of interest other than those already registered and set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

## 3. Minutes of the Broads Local Access Forum meeting held on 8 March 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## 4. Summary of actions and outstanding issues following decisions at previous meetings

### Lost paths in the Broads

The Chair raised the query at the Norfolk Local Access Forum Rights of Way subgroup meeting but there has been no response from Norfolk County Council officers. The Chair agreed to raise the item again at next week's Norfolk Local Access Forum Rights of Way subgroup meeting.

### Staithe report

Dan Hoare reported that the Authority are making progress on 24 hour moorings and are negotiating a public staithe with the Environment Agency (EA).

### Water quality monitoring

The Chair sent a letter to the Director of Strategic Services (DoSS) sharing the views of the Forum on water quality monitoring in the Broads and raised the issue at the Broads Plan Partnership meeting. The DoSS responded to the BLAF Chair asking for more details about the request from the Forum.

Following the recommendation from BLAF, officers presented the report [Risk to waterways users from water-borne disease in the Broads](#) to the Broads Authority in May. At the meeting it was suggested that the Authority should be conducting its own monitoring trails. Members

voted against this as the results would be extremely variable and the Authority is not set up to conduct monitoring. The monitoring should remain with the EA and the Broads Authority should continue raising awareness and putting pressure on the water companies through the Broadland Catchment Partnership and storm overflow discharge reduction plans, which are now legally binding. The Broads Authority website will also be updated to include the risk of water borne diseases for paddle sports users and open water swimming, and what steps users can take to reduce the hazards.

**The Waterways and Recreation Officer agreed to update the BA website to include the risk of water borne diseases for paddle sports users and open water swimming.**

The meeting today is not quorate therefore a recommendation cannot be made however, several Forum members would still like to see the Authority conduct its own water quality monitoring so that the data can be presented to the EA and Anglian Water. A Blue Flag scheme which applies to inland waterways was suggested and would be an asset to the tourism of the Broads and raise the status of rivers.

Ken Hawkins reminded the Forum that that the topic could be raised at a future Norfolk Local Access Forum meeting.

### **Permissive access and ELMS**

A letter has been sent to the Secretary of State for the Environment regarding the Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS) and permissive access, a response has not yet been received. The Norfolk Local Access Forum have received a response from their letter and there was an indication that stakeholders will be consulted on this matter in more detail in the future.

### **Potter Heigham bridge**

A letter was sent to Norfolk County Council supporting the permanent pedestrianisation of Potter Heigham Bridge with the inclusion of horse riding and cycling. The bridge has since reopened to motorised traffic again. Potter Heigham Parish Council have been consulting residents on their preferred option for the future of the bridge.

### **Somerton Parish Council footpath**

The Chair has written to Somerton Parish Council, supporting the aspiration of reinstating Footpath No.8. The Ramblers have also offered their support.

## **5. Campaigning for more public access in National Parks**

Ruth Bradshaw, Policy and Research Manager for Campaign for National Parks (CNP) joined the meeting to present the current campaign, more public access in National Parks. CNP is an independent voice of National Parks in England and Wales and is the campaigning collective of over 40 local and national NGOs including The Broads Society. The organisation receives no Government funding and relies on donations from its members.

### Proportion of open access land in each National Park

Last November the Guardian published an article looking at the proportion of open access land in each of the National Parks which generated a lot of enquires for CNP. The article was based on a small analysis that CNP carried out comparing the amount of open access land against the size of the National Park. The data was taken from each of the National Park Authority websites however the information was not available for all. The Broads had the lowest percentage of open access land available, but it was noted that the make up of the Broads and its reason for designation is different to other National Parks.

### More public access in National Parks

Current CNP aspirations:

- Natural England must review the open access maps they issued in 2004 and 2005. The current deadline for this review is 2024 to 2025. CNP would like to see more areas designated and a revision to the definition of open access. The Ramblers have started a campaign to extend the definition to include woodlands.
- An increase in the number of Rangers in the National Parks as set out in the Glover review.
- Trails to extend backpack camping and overturn the legal ruling which removed long established rights to wild camping on Dartmoor.
- Change the purposes of National Parks as a much stronger emphasis on ensuring that people from all parts of society can visit, and changes to the National Park Authority boards to ensure there's better representation of the people making the decisions about National Parks.
- Better transport options to the National Parks.

### CNP campaigning

Over recent months CNP have been working on securing amendments to the levelling up and regeneration bill that is currently going through Parliament. Changes include, increased access, support for nature recovery and stronger duties on other bodies such as the Highways Agency to deliver those purposes.

Looking forward to the general election, CNP are developing a series of manifesto asks and talking to the individual parties, the parliamentarians and candidates asking them to commit to the manifesto.

### Comments and answers to questions

A local paper reported on the statistics for open access land in the Broads but did not investigate the reasons why the percentage was so low. The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 defined 'open country' (mountain, moor, heath and down) or registered common land as open access, most of which are not in the Broads. The CROW act does not include water. Areas such as Hickling Broad have a public right of navigation but would not be



legally defined as open access. Reviewing the definition of open access land would be welcomed.

British Canoeing have been pushing for more access to the water as part of the changes to the open access definition.

Access to land owned by trusts such as the RSPB and Wildlife Trusts is permissive only and cannot be included as open access land. The public may also be excluded at certain times of the year for conservation reasons.

The coverage of open access land in National Parks does not consider footpaths. Often there are plenty of other places which the public can access so long as they remain on a path. Dan Hoare added, as part of a reporting exercise to Defra it was noted that the Access for All footpaths were often not public rights of way but were permissive footpaths. These footpaths are open to the public but do not get captured in the metrics.

CNP is undertaking a research project titled the National Parks Health Check. The project will look at a range of indicators including water quality, to see how the National Parks compare to each other and what needs to change to try and ensure that they are delivering on improvements. The results will be published in the autumn.

CNP are not in favour of direct elections to National Park Authorities. Direct elections could start politicising the authorities, there is a large expense associated with the campaigns for a potential low turn out, and it would be difficult to manage who should be able vote in the elections.

Footpaths being eroded inland and becoming lost to the river has not been picked up by CNP. The Ramblers would be more appropriate to start a campaign on this issue.

Up to date information on the campaigns that CNP are working on can be found on their website and on social media. CNP also work with The Broads Society.

## 6. Waterways access

Dan Hoare presented their report which outlines some of the challenges and constraints on management activities for waterway access and the current approach taken by the Broads Authority. The report captures some of the water access issues that are not traditionally picked up within Navigation Committee such as paddle sports and open water swimming which often take place outside of the main areas traditionally managed for motorboats and larger sailing vessels.

A list of publicly accessible slipways and launching points can be found on the Authority's website: [Slipways and launching points \(broads-authority.gov.uk\)](https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/slipways-and-launching-points). The site also includes an interactive map which includes access points for canoes and paddleboards.

The ecological water quality in the Broads has improved year on year over the last five years. As the clarity has increased, so has the growth of water plants. A hydroacoustic survey carried

out in May 2023 on Hickling Broad showed that there were water plants on 83% of the bed of the Broad. This is 15% greater than the same time last year.

Vessels are advised to stay within the marked channels which are regularly cut by one of three water plant cutting vessels. Permissions and permits for water plant cutting are for marked channels only. Outside of the marked channels there is a risk of vessels becoming stuck and paddleboarders, windsurfers and canoers/kayakers getting into difficulty in areas of dense water plant growth.

### **Comments and answers to questions**

Sailboats require wider channels to be cut as they need the width to tack and move out of the way of motorboats. Dan Hoare invited members to attend the Navigation Committee tomorrow where water plant management and navigation will be discussed. [Water Plant Management \(broads-authority.gov.uk\)](https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/Water-Plant-Management)

A member suggested adding launching points from riverside pubs to the interactive map. Pubs should also be encouraged to install a safety ladder to become a paddle friendly location. The Authority can share the standard design details and specifications for the safety ladders.

## **7. Broads Local Access Forum Annual Report 2022/23**

Andrew Walters presented the Broads Local Access Forum Annual Report 2022/23 and reported the number of members fell to 14 this year. Recruitment will commence over the summer for new members to ensure that all interest groups are represented on the Forum.

## **8. Integrated Access Strategy and Boat Census update**

Andrew Walters provided an update on the Integrated Access Strategy (IAS) and Boat Census. The most recent IAS edition was in 2019, and it is now due for an update. The IAS is used alongside the Broads Plan, Waterways and Management Strategy, Broads Local Plan and Sustainable Tourism Strategy.

The updated IAS will incorporate the Mooring Strategy, a budget forecast to help with the decision making process and a prioritisation index. The seven aspirations of the IAS will also be reviewed to ensure that they are still relevant.

There will be two rounds of consultation with key stakeholders. The scoping paper which will include the aims and objectives of the IAS will be shared with stakeholders in the coming weeks. The draft strategy is due to be complete by the end of October 2023.

### **Boat Census**

The boat census takes place every five years and provides data which feeds into various areas of the Authority's work including the IAS. The census is now due to take place again and the survey is being reviewed. Previously the data was collected manually by a large group of volunteers set up in various locations across the Broads. This method meant that the data was a snapshot of the Broads for the day of the census.

The next census will ask:

1. What is the density of boat usage across the system?
2. What is the percentage occupancy of moorings?
3. How busy are the protected/sensitive sites?

The previous method of collecting data would not be sufficient for the questions which are being asked in the census. The data will be collected by ActiveXchange, a data platform which gathers information from 45,000 different mobile apps. The platform can identify how many people are at a certain location at any time based on a 100m x 100m grid. The data will show the volume of boat traffic and mooring occupancy on any given day.

### **Comments**

Suffolk County Council should be included as key stakeholders for the IAS update. It was also recommended that The Broads Society, District, and Parish Councils were included in the consultation.

Large day trip vessels may distort the data being collected due to the volume of people and mobile phones onboard. Rangers have a good understanding of the Broads, and their knowledge should be used alongside the data collected.

Information hubs to signpost moorings, bridge heights and public toilets in busy locations was suggest for the IAS.

## **9. Any other business**

None.

## **10. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Broads Local Access Forum will be held on Wednesday 30 August 2023 at 10.00am.

The meeting ended at 12.10pm.

Signed by

Chair

## Appendix 1 – Declaration of interests Broads Local Access Forum, 07 June 2023

Member	Agenda/minute	Nature of interest
Keith Bacon	4. Summary of actions and outstanding issues following decisions at previous meetings	Occupier of land immediately adjoining the bridge
Keith Bacon	5. Campaigning for more public access in National Parks	Member and Trustee of Broads Society
Keith Bacon	6. Waterways access	Chair/Trustee of Catfield staithe on Hickling Broad
Peter Dixon	5. Campaigning for more public access in National Parks	Trustee of UK National Parks Foundation
Peter Dixon	6. Waterways access	Resident of Hickling
Peter Mason	5. Campaigning for more public access in National Parks	Member and Trustee of Broads Society
Christopher Yardley	6. Waterways access	Member of Hickling sailing club

# Broads Local Access Forum

30 August 2023

Agenda item number 6

Summary of actions and outstanding issues following discussions at previous meetings

Title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Summary of actions	Progress so far	Status
Lost Paths in the Broads	09/06/2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify 'Lost Paths' to the river</li> <li>Contact NCC and SCC to identify 'Lost Paths'</li> </ul>	<p><b>September 2021</b> Norfolk LAF representative agreed to raise this item at a future meeting.</p> <p><b>December 2021:</b> Norfolk LAF representative agreed that 'Lost Paths' will be raised at the January 2022 Norfolk Local Access Forum meeting.</p> <p><b>August 2022:</b> The Chair has written to Norfolk County Council and Suffolk Council and requested a list of all the paths that have been lost to the river.</p> <p><b>March 2023:</b> The Chair agreed to raise this item at the upcoming NLAF Rights of Way subgroup meeting.</p>	In progress

Title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Summary of actions	Progress so far	Status
				<b>June 2023:</b> The Chair agreed to raise this item at the upcoming NLAF Rights of Way subgroup meeting.	
Staithes Report	04/12/2019		Contact the Environment Agency asking their opinion as a follow-up from the publication of the staithes report.	<p><b>September 2021:</b>The Chair has written to the Environment Agency but has yet to receive a response. A follow up phone call will take place with David Horsfall.</p> <p><b>March 2023:</b> The Chair agreed to select two staithes of interest to the Forum and contact the EA.</p> <p><b>June 2023:</b> The Authority are making progress on 24 hour moorings and are negotiating a public staithe with the Environment Agency.</p>	In progress
Water quality monitoring in the Broads	30/11/2022	Waterways and Recreation Officer	Invite the Environment Agency to a future meeting to discuss water quality monitoring in the Broads.	<p><b>February 2023:</b> Written update to be provided in advance of the meeting on 8 March 2023.</p> <p><b>March 2023:</b> The Chair sent letter to the Director of Strategic Services (DoSS) sharing the views of the Forum on water quality monitoring in the Broads on 09/03/2023, The views were also discussed the March Broads Partnership meeting.</p>	In progress

Title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Summary of actions	Progress so far	Status
				<p><b>April 2023:</b> DoSS responded to the BLAF Chair requesting more details about the request from the Forum.</p> <p><b>May 2023:</b> A report of water quality will be presented at the Broads Authority meeting on the 12/05/2023.</p> <p><b>June 2023:</b> The Waterways and Recreation Officer agreed to update the BA website to include the risk of water borne diseases for paddle sports users and open water swimming.</p>	

Date of report: 22 August 2023

# Broads Local Access Forum

30 August 2023

Agenda item number 9

## Integrated Access Strategy Projects update

Report by Waterways and Recreation Officer

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### Summary

This report gives an update on some of the strategic priorities identified in the Integrated Access Strategy.

### Recommendation

To note the report.

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Every year, as part of the Integrated Access Strategy (IAS), we identify a number of strategic priority projects to be delivered by the Broads Authority and its partners.
- 1.2. Setting these priorities helps us target resources and external funding sources. Many of these projects cannot be delivered without working with external partners and securing external funding. Where partnerships are already identified, the project will be scored higher in the priority scoring matrix.

## 2. Update

- 2.1. A progress update on the highest priority projects as well as some of the lesser-known projects, have been listed in table 1.
- 2.2. The table includes a column showing which of the seven objectives of the IAS each project meets. The seven objectives are:
  1. To improve links between land and water and to the water's edge
  2. To improve access links to local facilities, settlements, and visitor destination points.
  3. To improve access for all in the Broads.
  4. To encourage sustainable travel choices such as public transport, walking, cycling and non-powered boating, and improve links between public transport provision, visitor destination points and access routes.
  5. To deliver the River Wensum Strategy through the River Wensum Strategy Partnership.



6. To encourage provision of access routes that relieve visitor pressure on internationally designated sites, avoid disturbance of protected species and help to accommodate growth.
7. To provide appropriate information on access to recreational opportunities and interpretation about recreational sites.

**Table 1**

Integrated Access Strategy priorities 2021/2022 – progress update August 2023

Project	Progress	Objective	Partners
Broads Mills trail	Status: <b>On track</b> Signage and interpretation currently being ordered.	2,7	Broads Authority Norfolk County Council
Wherryman's Way Hardley Flood	Status: <b>On track</b> The project team are scoping options for proceeding with the £216,000 currently available from the original CIL funding. Norfolk County Council are also actively looking for alternative funding to support the project. At the Hardley Flood site - there are three major ecological considerations (European protected species) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Otters by footpath line - commissioned consultant to report.</li> <li>2. Water vole -a Norfolk Biodiversity Info report has been requested.</li> <li>3. Desmoulin's Whorl Snails – very specialist species – awaiting report.</li> </ol>	1,2	Broads Authority Norfolk County Council
Wherryman's Way Bramerton to Surlingham	Status: <b>On track</b> Broads Authority are working with engineering consultants on a gabion basket and rock roll design for the bank restoration.	1,2	Broads Authority Norfolk County Council

Project	Progress	Objective	Partners
Hoveton Riverside Park	Status: <b>Delayed</b> Design work now underway for piling replacement.	1,2,3,7	Broads Authority North Norfolk District Council
GIS Recreation maps	Status: <b>Delayed</b> Slipway and launch point map now live on the Authority's website. <a href="https://broads-authority.gov.uk">Slipways and launching points (broads-authority.gov.uk)</a> Next step is to incorporate moorings, angling platforms, waste facilities.	7	Broads Authority
Discovery Hubs	Status: <b>Phase 1 complete</b> – hubs in three locations, Gt. Yarmouth, Beccles and Salhouse.	4, 7	Broads Authority Broads Charitable Trust
New signage on Wherryman's Way	Status: <b>Completed</b> Signage in place	1,7	NCC
Rockland Staithe to Rockland Broad	Status: <b>Completed</b> New footpath surface completed	1,3	NCC
River Wensum Strategy	Status: <b>On track</b> Delivery Plan can be viewed here <a href="#">River Wensum Strategy   Norwich City Council</a> to see progress on the suite of projects.	1,2,5	Norwich City Council, Broads Authority
Geldeston Canoe pontoon	Status: <b>Completed</b> Pontoon now in place and being well used. Small changes to be made to signage to encourage correct storage of canoes/paddleboards.	1,2,4,6	Broads Authority Broads Charitable Trust The Canoe Foundation River Waveney Trust
Extend the Navigation - Geldeston	Status: <b>Delayed</b>	1,2	River Waveney Trust, Broads Authority
Tactile Map Whitlingham	Status: <b>Completed</b> Map in place	3,7	Broads Authority Whitlingham Charitable Trust

Project	Progress	Objective	Partners
Restoration of Gillingham FP14	Status: <b>On track</b> Norfolk County Council leading on restoration work.	1,2,6	Broads Authority Norfolk Trails
Wild Swimming advice and guidance	Status: <b>Completed</b> Website guidance only <a href="https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/outdoor-swimming">Outdoor swimming (broads-authority.gov.uk)</a>	1,7	Broads Authority BLAF – Swimming subgroup
Access for all paths Whitlingham	Status: <b>On track</b> Currently being constructed – due to be completed Summer 23.	1,2,3	Broads Authority Whitlingham Charitable Trust
Changing places facilities Multiple locations	Status: <b>On track</b> Working with local district councils who are eligible for funding through the Government. Whitlingham complete and in place. Lowestoft site still being considered.	2,3	Broads Authority North Norfolk District Council South Norfolk/Broadland District Council Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Permissive path Coldharbour to Womack Water	Status: <b>Delayed</b> Initial discussions with landowners were positive, however they were interested in funding through an environmental stewardship scheme so wanted to speak to the Broads Authority Environment Policy Adviser first.	1,2	Broads Authority
Permissive Path Horning marshes	Status: <b>Delayed</b> Broads Authority asset manager to organise the agreements. Delayed due to the asset going to probate.	1,2	Broads Authority
Cycle parking facilities Broads Executive area	Status: <b>Delayed</b> Audit conducted and several sites identified.	2,4	Broads Authority

Author: Andrew Walters

Date of report: 16 August 2023

[Broads Plan](#) objectives: E1, E3

# Broads Local Access Forum

30 August 2023

Agenda item number 8

## Integrated Access Strategy- scoping paper

Report by Head of Construction, Maintenance & Ecology

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### Summary

An interim update on the Stage 1 consultation of the refreshed Integrated Access Strategy, to be completed by end March 2024.

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The current [Integrated Access Strategy](#) (2019) aims to address the issue of access routes, including to and between land and water, and their connections to key visitor facilities and sustainable transport links. To ensure the strategy is truly integrated across the Broads, from April 2024 it will also guide mooring and de-masting provision on the Broads waterways, as previously covered by the Authority's 2006 Mooring Strategy.
- 1.2. An initial consultation to refresh the basic assumptions of the Integrated Access Strategy (IAS) has been opened to statutory and major stakeholder organisations as part of this five-year review. The IAS review also keeps pace with the refreshed [Broads Plan](#) (2022-27) which has been produced in the interim period. The IAS is one of the sub-strategies that informs how the aims of the Broads Plan will be achieved. Various of other relevant sub-strategies also inform the IAS (including the [Local Plan for the Broads](#), [Waterways Management Strategy](#) and [Biodiversity & Water Strategy](#)).

- 1.3. This scoping paper describes the values, principles and aims of the suggested revisions to the strategy. Six questions were asked of responders, relating to whether the list of suggested values, principles and aims reflect the needs and concerns of Broads users.
- 1.4. This Stage 1 consultation was sent to a wide range of stakeholder organisations with involvement in access and boating activity in the Broads. The consultation was open for one month, ending 8 August 2023. This report gives a summary of the responses received to date for all Values and Principles.
- 1.5. As Theme 3 (section 6.3 in the Appendix) deals solely with moorings and de-masting moorings on the public navigation, these comments will not be reported and discussed at this Stage 1 with the Broads Local Access Forum. This topic will be discussed with the Navigation Committee on 2 November 2023 and will be reported at a future BLAF meeting, as detailed in section 5.

## 2. Summary of responses for the core Values of the Strategy

- 2.1. Other than the generally supporting comments, those which specifically fed back on the consultation text included valuable statements for all the proposed values. Where alterations to the emphasis of the text are likely to be put forward into the Stage 2 consultation, these are summarised below.
- 2.2. A - Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion. A comment was received that “the values of Inclusivity align with British Canoeing’s values and cross cutting themes of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; being inclusive to help everyone enjoy paddling, regardless of identity, ability or circumstance.”
- 2.3. B - Environment & Sustainability. A comment was received that “the benefits of getting more people active and connecting those people with nature is key” and “our blue spaces should be welcoming, accessible and clean, for the enjoyment of all to connect with nature for the benefit of the environment as people will care for the Broads and also for the benefit of people’s mental and physical wellbeing”. However, as a counterpoint, another comment was that “having a representation of quiet, no access, limiting/zoning certain activities in a map-based form would overcome future conflict.” Both of these values can be achieved through adopting an evidence-based approach seeking to gain multiple-benefits at the Broads wide scale.
- 2.4. C - Financial cost effectiveness. Several comments were received that benefits to public health and the local economy should be considered in the wording of this value, as additional benefits that need recognition.
- 2.5. One of the challenges in interpreting the responses on the core Values of the Integrated Access Strategy has been that some stakeholders are keen to draw in other wider environmental or navigation issues into a strategy that is not directly focussed on, or able to effectively tackle them. A note needs to be included in subsequent consultation stages to highlight that other, more appropriate statutory consultation mechanisms

exist, as well as being already captured under the wider Broads Plan and other Broads Authority sub-strategies (see paragraph 1.2).

### 3. Summary of responses for the Principles of the Strategy

3.1. Table 1 below summarises the comments where modifications to the strategy text are likely to be put forward into the Stage 2 consultation.

3.2. Table 1. Summary of comments on the Principles

Principle	Comment
5.1	Add that <i>if impacts cannot be mitigated effectively, then net gain in benefits off-site or other habitat improvements will be sought</i>
5.3	Add <i>volunteers</i> to list of stakeholders included in partnership working
5.4	Add in the <i>concept of "least restrictive option"</i> when considering new or replacement access developments
5.6	Add the need to follow <i>the design principles of: coherent; safe; comfortable; and attractive; in new access development to help achieve the greatest range of benefits for all users.</i>
5.7	Add <i>sustainable materials</i> to the considerations for conserving local character in access developments
5.9	Add <i>no net loss of slipways/launch points</i> to the suite of sites directly managed by the Authority
5.13	General comments on how to balance the need to positively manage and maintain access to Protected Sites for all the beneficial reasons such access brings, with the need for ecological mitigation of new schemes and increased demand where growth of population and settlements is planned in and around the Broads.  Add the need to increase the resilience of access provision in the face of impacts from climate change

### 4. Summary of responses for the Aims of the Strategy

4.1. Tables 2 and 3 below summarise the comments where modifications to the strategy text are likely to be put forward into the Stage 2 consultation.

4.2. Table 2. Summary of Theme 1 - Land-based Access comments

Aim	Comment
6.1.1	Add <i>Network Rail</i> specifically as a partner to work with in promoting access to and within the Broads
6.1.4	Add <i>electric bikes</i> specifically as items that would benefit from increased public electric charging network
6.1.7	Add <i>to help relieve visitor pressure on sensitive sites and improving or developing routes to/from urban areas nearby or within The Broads, targeting nearby areas with poor access to wild spaces and nature, or populations from minoritized ethnic or lower socioeconomic backgrounds</i>
6.1.9	Additional aim - <i>Ensure new development provides safe and suitable access for all users and promotes and facilitates sustainable modes of travel.</i>
General comments	Need to add aims relating directly to encouraging diversity in visitor groups or provisions to overcome social or cultural barriers to access
	Need to add aims specifically relating to access for children and young people or those living in urban areas
	Add a "back to basics" aim for liaising with the relevant Highway Authorities to ensure that all existing public paths, within the Broads Authority area, are actually usable, ie. free from obstruction and in a fit state of repair, as per the Highway Authority's statutory duties

4.3. Table 3. Summary of Theme 2 - Land-based Access comments

Theme 2 – Land-to-Water access	
6.2.1	Add that <i>hubs should have adequate facilities including car parking, to facilitate the transport of craft (car sharing encouraged)</i>
6.2.2	Add improve <i>provision</i> of access points
6.2.3	Include <i>paddle launch points</i> to types of facilities that would benefit from improved access to land-based facilities
6.2.7	Change emphasis from simply improving car parking, to only targeted parking for those towing boat trailers and adding cycle parking/storage

## 5. Consultation and IAS development timeline

### 5.1. Table 4 - Dates and milestones for the stages (from consultation to final adoption)

Dates	Stage	Status
11 Jul - 8 Aug 2023	Stage 1 consultation on IAS values, principles and aims with statutory and larger stakeholder organisations	completed
21 Aug – 18 Sept	Stage 1 consultation with sailing clubs and other waterways users	current
30 Aug	Summary of Stage 1 consultation on Themes 1 and 2 with BLAF	this report
2 Nov	Summary of Stage 1 consultation on Themes 2 and 3 with the Navigation Committee	
9 Nov – 7 Dec	Stage 2 consultation on IAS text and objectives section with all stakeholders	
11 Jan 2024	Draft IAS document to Navigation Committee	
06 Mar	Draft IAS document to BLAF	
15 Mar	Final draft IAS to Broads Authority	

Author: Dan Hoare

Date of report: 16 August 2023

Background papers: [Integrated Access Strategy](#) (2019)

[Broads Plan](#) objectives: **E1** - Improve the integrated network of access routes and points (with easier access for people with mobility and sensory needs), linked to visitor facilities

**C4** - Maintain and improve safety and security standards and user behaviour on the waterways.

Appendix 1 – Stage 1 Consultation on the Integrated Access Strategy



## Appendix 1 – Stage 1 Consultation on the Integrated Access Strategy (sections 3-6 only)

### 3. What will the strategy cover?

The strategy will cover three key themes:

**Theme 1:** Land-based access – e.g., improve access links to local facilities, settlements, and visitor destination points.

**Theme 2:** Land-to-water access – e.g., provision of slipways and launch points.

**Theme 3:** Mooring and de-masting provision e.g., identifying gaps in the mooring network.

### 4. What will be the core values of the Strategy?

Each of the above themes will have to consider whether both guidance and project proposals are aligned to the IAS values of:

**A. Inclusivity** – to ensure that access is available to as many people as possible, regardless of their age, ability, and protected characteristic(s). It is based on the principle that providing for the widest range of users creates better places, richer experiences, and benefits.<sup>1</sup>

**B. Sustainability** – to ensure that access delivery should seek to reduce impact on the environment.

**C. Financial cost effectiveness** – to ensure that the cost of all projects is evaluated at the outset and the financial viability looks at a broad range of solutions, for example working in partnership to maximise funding potential and long-term outcomes.

### 5. What will be the guiding principles of the strategy?

The following principles will be used to help guide the development and delivery of access projects in the Broads:

- 5.1 Project proposals for new or improved access provision will need to demonstrate that negative impacts on the environment and designated sites can be minimised. Where possible, access schemes should be designed to deliver biodiversity and habitat improvement.
- 5.2 To encourage sustainable travel choices such as public transport, walking, cycling and non-powered boating, and improve links between public transport provision, visitor destination points and access between land and water and to the water's edge.

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<sup>1</sup> taken from 'Outdoor Accessibility Guide,' Paths for All & Sensory Trust (2023).

- 5.3 Where possible, project proposals should demonstrate partnership and community involvement in planning, delivery, and ongoing maintenance liability. Stakeholders will be consulted on the scope and design of project proposals to maximise opportunities for collaborative working.
- 5.4 Ensure provision of safe, barrier free access is key to encouraging and enabling people of all ages and abilities to experience the Broads' countryside and waterways. Sometimes only minor works are required to make routes and access points easily accessible to a wide range of users.
- 5.5 Encourage sustainable development of boating and associated infrastructure to be consistent planning policies and other statutory consents. Connecting to local plan and planning documents
- 5.6 Project proposals should, where possible, provide multiple benefits for users with differing interests, needs and abilities (e.g., creating a new mooring to link to the existing rights of way network and local facilities, or improving surfaces and removing barriers to open up an access point or route to people with mobility problems).
- 5.7 Project proposals should seek to conserve and enhance the character of the area using materials and construction techniques appropriate to a protected landscape.
- 5.8 Maintain the free use of Broads Authority unstaffed moorings.
- 5.9 Maintain a policy of no net reduction in publicly accessible mooring length directly managed by the Broads Authority.
- 5.10 The Broads Authority should not enter leases for mooring sites that require the payment of annual fees higher than those recommended by the Authority's property adviser.
- 5.11 When considering acquiring new sites, the Broads Authority should consider the cumulative implications of taken on new liabilities, in particular the potential cost of repairing and relacing piling, duration of tenure when leasing, etc.
- 5.12 Project design should consider the potential impacts of climate change, including changes in water levels to support climate change resilience and adaptation.
- 5.13 Encourage provision of access routes that relieve visitor pressure on internationally designated sites, avoid disturbance of protected species and help to accommodate growth.

## 6. What will be the aims of the strategy?

The proposed aims of the strategy are as follows. They are grouped in to the three themes.

## **6.1 Theme 1: Land-based access - Aims.**

- 6.1.1 Work with local transport authorities and others to maintain, improve and promote public transport provision in and to the Broads.
- 6.1.2 Support the development of cycle hire facilities and routes in new locations for the benefit of boaters and land-based visitors.
- 6.1.3 Support the development of canoe trails with appropriate facilities in suitable areas.
- 6.1.4 Generate a strategic delivery plan for installation of Electric Charging points.
- 6.1.5 Provide appropriate information on access to recreational opportunities and interpretation about recreational sites.
- 6.1.6 Determine where access improvements to land designated as open access land under the CROW Act 2000 would be appropriate.
- 6.1.7 Identify and promote the development of new access routes to improve the connectivity of the existing public access network, including rights of way, permissive paths, and long-distance routes.
- 6.1.8 Identify potential new bridleway routes that will allow riders to avoid dangerous road riding – including shared use routes suitable for horse riding, cycling, and walking.

## **6.2 Theme 2: Land-to-water access – Aims.**

- 6.2.1 The development of access hubs where it would be appropriate to focus access provision.
- 6.2.2 Improve access points between land and water, including visitor moorings, demasting moorings, safety moorings, isolated moorings, canoe portages, ferries, and slipways.
- 6.2.3 Improve links from moorings to land-based facilities and visitor destinations.
- 6.2.4 Improve pedestrian access to the water's edge and alongside water for the purposes of walking, angling (including angling platforms) and bird watching.
- 6.2.5 Extending access to new areas of navigable water space where appropriate.
- 6.2.6 Work in partnership to protect, staithes rights and the access benefits they bring.
- 6.2.7 Identify appropriate locations where improved car parking would benefit users (e.g., at slipways).

### 6.3 Theme 3: Mooring and de-masting provision - Aims.

- 6.3.1 Reduce potential user conflict through good communication with relevant stakeholders and mitigating through design and alternative provision.
- 6.3.2 Consider and encourage partnership development / funding opportunities to deliver objectives, such as enhancing existing sites and facilities.
- 6.3.3 Seek contributions/ establish charges for ancillary services e.g., water.
- 6.3.4 Ensure new mooring sites and launch points will be assessed for potential impacts in environmentally sensitive localities. Encourage innovative mooring design to provide habitat opportunities and mitigate landscape impacts.
- 6.3.5 Improve the dissemination of information to users on mooring opportunities, to include location of sites, facilities available.
- 6.3.6 Promote double alongside mooring at appropriate sites.
- 6.3.7 Work in partnership with third parties to maximise publicly accessible short-stay mooring provision.
- 6.3.8 The Broads Authority will work to ensure wherever possible that the distribution of moorings is a maximum 30 minute cruising time (equal to 2 miles distance at 4 mph) apart.
- 6.3.9 Review de-masting provision in the Broads and develop a prioritisation methodology to guide future investment in new provision.