

# Broads Local Access Forum

## Agenda 04 September 2024

Arrival from 9.30am. Meeting starts at 10.00am

Catfield Village Hall, Hall Road, Catfield, Great Yarmouth

### 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 5 June 2024** (Pages 4-12)
6. **Summary of actions and outstanding issues following decisions at previous meetings- to note the schedule** (Pages 13 - 16)

### Items for discussion

7. **Paths lost to the River** (Pages 17-19)  
Report by Waterways and Recreation Officer
8. **Active Travel England** (Pages 20-21)  
Report by Partnership and External Funding Manager
9. **Broadland Catchment Partnership and water quality**  
Presentation by Catchment and Farming Officer

### Other matters

10. Any other business
11. To note the date of the next meeting – **Wednesday** 20 November at 10.00am.

# Broads Local Access Forum membership

Member	Address	Phone number	Email	Interest
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@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@north-norfolk.gov.uk">Harry.blathwayt@north-norfolk.gov.uk</a>	Broads Authority
Christine Cane	The Roundhouse 160 Tuttlles 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
Geoff Doggett	68 Pilgrims Way Harleston Norfolk IP20 9QE	01379 853464	<a href="mailto:geoffdoggett@gmail.com">geoffdoggett@gmail.com</a>	Waterborne recreation/nature conservation
Tony Gibbons	19 Blithewood Gardens Sprowston NR7 8PS	01603 400973	<a href="mailto:tonygibbons.ndaa@gmail.com">tonygibbons.ndaa@gmail.com</a>	Angling
Edward Gilder	30 The Hills Reedham Norwich NR13 3AR	0777188 3406	<a href="mailto:edwardgilder@yahoo.co.uk">edwardgilder@yahoo.co.uk</a>	Cycling/ archaeology and landscape heritage
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
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
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
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	High House Farm, Potter Heigham Road, Catfield, Great Yarmouth. Norfolk. NR29 5BU	0776776 4398	<a href="mailto:joemitchell@afiweb.net">joemitchell@afiweb.net</a>	Landowners and managers/ nature conservation
Katie Phillips	c/o Broads Authority Yare House 62-64 Thorpe House Norwich NR1 1RY	01603 610734	<a href="mailto:outdoorskatiep@gmail.com">outdoorskatiep@gmail.com</a>	Walking/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
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**

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# Broads Local Access Forum

## Minutes of the meeting held on 05 June 2024

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## Present

Keith Bacon – in the Chair, Richard Atkins, Geoff Dogett, Edward Gilder, Tim Harris, Kate Leonard, David Lilley, Peter Mason, Joe Mitchell, Kaite Phillips, Steve Read.

## In attendance

Hannah Davison- Natural England, Dan Hoare – Head of Construction, Maintenance and Ecology, Juliette Howlett- Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer, Kylie Moos – Administrative Officer, Dan Shone-Silk, River Waveney Trust, Jo Thompson – Waterways and Recreation Officer, Katie Utting- River Waveney Trust.

## 1. Apologies for absence and welcome

The Chair welcomed new Broads Local Access Forum (BLAF) members Edward Gilder and Katie Philips. Hannah Davison has also joined the Forum from Natural England as a coopted member. Hannah’s role focuses on connecting people with nature, particularly those who have more barriers to accessing nature and are traditionally underrepresented.

Following today’s meeting there will be an optional site visit to Falcon Meadow.

**Apologies** received from Harry Blathwayt, Christine Cane, Peter Dixon, Tony Gibbons, Christopher Yardley.

## 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 6 March 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2024 were approved as a correct.

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

### Lost paths in the Broads

Jo Thompson noted that they do not yet have an appropriate Officer contact for Suffolk County Council. Norfolk County Council have provided a list of paths that have been reported as inaccessible over the last six months by members of the public.

**Jo Thompson agreed to visit the paths and report on their condition at the next meeting.**

A Forum member asked if the desired outcome is to get the paths reinstated. The Chair responded, the outcome will depend on the findings of the report and what condition the paths are currently in. Another Forum member added, the item was first brought to the Forum when Norfolk County Council had deemed a local footpath as ‘lost to the river’ and the Ramblers Association advised that this is not a status for a path. The Forum member added, it

is unclear if this is a national issue and taking place across all National Parks. If it is a national issue, the Forum should push to review the legislation and protect the paths in the future.

## **Staithe**

The Broads Authority are in discussion with the Environment Agency about taking over the management of a public staithe in the Broads.

## **Water quality monitoring in the Broads**

Anglian Water have been in contact with Jo Thompson and advised that they are able to supply Get River Positive Hach kits for water testing on the Broads. Volunteers can carry out the sampling and the kits are then sent off for testing. Jo Thompson asked if the Forum could identify areas of the Broads that would be suitable for testing, or if they know of any groups that could get involved. It is not known at this stage what the sampling will be testing for.

A Forum member commented, water quality testing needs to be coordinated with other organisations that are carrying sampling and presented in a format that the Environment Agency will accept. Volunteers would like to know that the data they are collecting is going to be accepted. Another Forum member added, they have carried out their own testing in the past and would strongly recommend that clearance is received from the Environment Agency before the sampling starts. They also agreed that the sampling needs to be coordinated and it should be by either the Broads Authority or Environment Agency.

A Forum member suggested using a traffic light system, similar to what is used for the Water Framework Directive, to present the data to the public.

Katie Utting commented, [Catchment Systems Thinking Cooperative](#) (CaSTCo), are already looking at the role of citizen science, community monitoring and making sure that the data collected aligns with the Environment Agency. The project has developed a map where volunteers can report a pollution incident, this will automatically send a report to the Environment Agency. Katie Utting recommended contacting the Wensum Catchment Partnership who are involved in the project.

Dan Hoare reminded that the Forum that the original discussion was regarding faecal indicator organisms and how it impacts access, not the ecological quality of water in the Broads. A Forum member responded, this is good advice, but there is inadequate testing in the Broads and there has been little progress in the last 20 years. The Broads Authority should be doing more to push for more testing. A Forum member added, the Environment Agency are the responsible statutory body, but they would also like to see the Broads Authority more involved. They added, the public need to know about the water quality as they are the ones that are getting in the water. The Chair concluded, the Forum would still like to see the Broads Authority more involved in water quality, but the immediate action is the offer of water testing kits and for Forum members to contact Jo Thompson if they are able to help with sampling.

**Jo Thompson agreed to confirm what the Hach kits will test for.**

Dan Hoare commented, two areas of work where the Broads Authority are involved in water quality discussions is the Broadland Futures Initiative (BFI) and Broadland Catchment Partnership. Working with the Environment Agency, BFI is currently modelling the penetration of salinity through the Broads system. Broadland Catchment Partnership is made up of stakeholders in Broadland and is looking for Citizen Science to fill the monitoring gaps. Dan Hoare suggested presentations from either of the partnerships at a future Forum meeting.

## 5. Bathing water designation at Falcon Meadow

Katie Utting, River Projects Officer at the River Waveney Trust provided an update on the application for bathing water designation at Falcon Meadow. If the site is designated, the Environment Agency will monitor water quality during the bathing season to protect the health of people bathing. Falcon Meadow was selected as it is a popular location for swimming and used by Sea Scouts and Waveney Valley Canoe Club. The application was unanimously supported by Bungay Town Council and has received lots of public support.

Archived photos from 1920 show that the area has been a popular spot for swimming, including school lessons, for many years. From the 1940s there were more concerns being raised about public health due to the increase in pollution from agriculture and sewage which was leaking into the river. A case of typhoid, several cases of salmonella and increasingly poor bacterial reports resulted in the council closing the area for swimming in 1958 and subsequently opening Beccles Lido.

Compared to the Europe, the UK has significantly fewer bathing water sites. In France there are 573 official bathing spots whereas in 2023 there were only three in the UK, all of which are classified as poor. 18 new sites have been designated this year taking the total to 21.

The River Waveney Trust were due to submit the application for Falcon Meadow but had to delay until 2024 due to a change in requirements from Defra. The government have since announced that they will not be taking any more applications for this year and will begin accepting applications again in spring 2025.

Bathing water site designation criteria:

- At least 100 bathers a day at the site over the peak period between 15<sup>th</sup> May- 30<sup>th</sup> September.
- Infrastructure and facilities, e.g., toilets
- Additional measures promote e.g., cafés, changing rooms, and public transport.
- Public consultation.

The public consultation has already been carried out and needs to be completed the same year as the application is submitted. The delay in Defra accepting applications means that the consultation will need to be completed again.

Grassroot groups and the local community arranged a protest after noticing sewage in the river and the publicity helped the River Waveney Trust receive funding from Anglian Water to carry out bacterial monitoring. Citizen science was used to monitor nine sites once a week.

The faecal indicator organisms test was looking for E. coli and intestinal enterococci which are the same tests that the Environment Agency use when classifying a bathing site. Following an analysis from an independent consultant, only four of the nine sites passed for water quality, including Falcon Meadow.

Anglian Water supports the application and have agreed if the site receives bathing water status, then they will fund tracer studies to see if Earsham sewage treatment works is reaching the bathing water area.

Achieving bathing water status does not necessarily mean that a site is safe, however it is a mechanism to get the Environment Agency to test for bacteria.

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

A Forum member asked if nitrogen and phosphorus are being tested. Katie Utting responded, the monitoring is for faecal indicator organisms only, using aseptic techniques for the sampling.

A Forum member asked how the quality of water is communicated to the public. Katie Utting responded, this is not taking place because Falcon Meadow has not yet been designated as a bathing water site. Once a site receives the bathing water designation then the Environment Agency will display the water quality on their website and on a sign at the site.

Dan Hoare asked if the Trust have used Outfall Safari. Outfall Safari is a Citizen Science method for locating, assessing the impact of, and reporting on polluting pipes in rivers. The Broads Authority Farming and Catchment Officer is a trainer in the Outfall Safari scheme, Dan Hoare suggested that they present at a future Forum meeting. Katie Utting responded, the Trust will be setting up the Outfall Safari scheme and they are also looking into walkover studies, sampling of nitrogen and phosphorus and taking part in the Mud Spotter surveys.

A Forum Member asked if the Blue Flag status could be applied to rivers for swimming. Katie Utting responded, the signage that is used at designated bathing sites to show the water quality is the same that is used on beaches.

## **6. Broads Local Access Forum annual report 2023-2024**

Jo Thompson presented the draft Broads Local Access Forum annual report 2023-2024 and asked for any comments before the report is presented at the Broads Authority AGM in July.

The Chair asked if the membership includes people that joined or left the Forum mid-way through the year.

### **Jo Thompson agreed to include the duration which members have been on the Forum for 2023-2024.**

A Forum member asked if the report should include the number of meetings that a member has attended. Dan Hoare responded, the attendance requirement of Forum members is set out in the constitution, but it is not a requirement that the information is publicly shared on individual member attendance. The Chair agreed that the attendance did not need to be



included in the report. Dan Hoare suggested the report includes the total number of members at the time who attended each meeting and whether this met quorum.

Jo Thompson requested that any further comments are emailed to them by 12 June.

## **7. Waterways and recreation project update**

Jo Thompson presented the waterways and recreation project update report to the Forum.

### **The Wherryman's Way**

Jo Thompson reported that initial contact has been made with the landowners for Bramerton Footpath 5 and this will be followed up once funding has been confirmed. Richard Atkins offered to help with the discussions as a representative of Surlingham Parish Council.

The first phase of Hardley Flood was granted planning permission on the 26 May and ecological studies are being carried out on site. Phase two is ecologically sensitive and it is possible that otters and water voles are present in the area as the path has been closed using a temporary closure for 10 years. Temporary closures are only supposed to be for six months. The Chair questioned who would have approved the temporary closures for such a long period. Dan Hoare responded, Norfolk County Council's Highways team have responsibility for these footpath closures.

Norfolk County Council have been planning to carry out the works using Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding however, this is ending in September 2024 and all CIL projects need to have at least started by September. Last year the CIL funding pot was £12million, whereas this year there is only £2million. This is because CIL funds are now being used to support and set up Nutrient Neutrality. Norfolk County Council are looking into alternative funding streams. Several Forum members commented that it is a shame that CIL funding has been reduced as it often supported small community projects and would like to see district councils maintain the funding and not county councils. A Forum member responded, CIL funding is paid to district councils who have a CIL plan and 15% goes to town or parish councils. Where a parish council has a neighbourhood plan, they are eligible for 25%. The remaining 75% is used for project funding by the district councils but can also be used by county councils.

### **Active Travel England Fund**

The Broads Authority has been awarded £100,000 to compile a Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for the Broads. The consultation will be launched at the Royal Norfolk Show and include a questionnaire and mapping exercise so that visitors are able to map out the paths that they feel need improvement. The consultation will also provide information about how many people are cycling and walking around the Broads. The consultation will be shared online, during drop ins and by reaching out to specific user groups in the Broads.

## 8. Farming in Protected Landscapes

Juliette Howlett, Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer provided an overview of the programme.

### Farming in Protected Landscapes

- Grant programme for farmers, land managers, and people in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs).
- Supports projects that help to improve, and prevent damage to, the landscape.
- Projects are proposed by farmers and land-managers through a bottom-up approach.
- Provides additional, short-term investment alongside existing agri-schemes.

### Eligibility

- Open to all farmers and land managers within the Broads and Norfolk Coast AONB.
- Funding can also support activity on land outside of the executive boundary.
- Applicants must manage all land in the application and have control of the activities.
- Applications can be from a collaboration of farmers to support a cluster group.

### Four themes of the programme

- Climate – reduced flood risk, more carbon being stored or sequestered
- Nature – habitat connectivity and biodiversity
- People – increasing and diversifying access
- Place – conserving historic structures and supporting farm businesses
- Projects must also support the priorities of the protected landscape management plan = Broads Plan 2022-2027.

### How to apply

- Contact Farming in Protected Landscapes officer to discuss any ideas [Farming in Protected Landscapes \(broads-authority.gov.uk\)](https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk).
- Guidance notes and application form can be found on our website.
- Apply at any time (rolling application window).
- Required consents and permissions to be gained prior to application.
- All projects must be completed by end of March 2025.

### Project funding

- Can be in other schemes but cannot be paid by another Exchequer fund for the same work.
- 40% to 80% of the costs depending on the commercial gain and outcomes of the project.
- If a machine or piece of equipment is in Farming Equipment and Technology Fund (FETF), or an activity is within (Countryside Stewardship) CS, we match the funding rate.
- If an activity is not in another scheme, we require three quotes for the work or item.
- Maximum grant value is £75,000 per project.

### Comments and answers to questions

Two thirds of the budget for 2024/2025 remaining.

A Forum member noted the similarities between the LEADER funded Local Action Groups (LAG) programme and Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL). They recommended contacting Pat Holtom who was the Chair of the Waveney Valley LAG as there were a lot of applicants that did not receive funding through LAG and may be suitable for FiPL.

Defra have announced an additional funding pot for FiPL projects that improve access and education within the protected landscape. This pot is separate to the funding which has been allocated to the Broads. Juliette Howlett added, they have put together an application for five tactile maps across public access locations.

A Forum member commented, often Defra grants start at £30,000 but there is no minimum about for FiPL projects. Often the smaller projects can make the biggest impact.

Applicants can be individuals as well as environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOS).

Applicants must have consent from the landowner before applying.

Projects are allowed to be outside of the Protected Landscape so long as show a clear benefit to the Broads.

## 9. Any other business

A Forum member raised the issue of Haven Bridge, Great Yarmouth which is owned by Norfolk County Council and operated by Peels Ports. An ongoing dispute between the two parties has meant the bridge is not fully operational and visitors are not able to reach the Broads by sea at Great Yarmouth. The Chair responded, Broads Local Access Forum gives advice on issues relating to public access to and from water, not navigation issues. Navigation queries need to be raised with the Navigation Committee. Dan Hoare added, the Recreation and Tourism strategy covers the importance of the gateways to the Broads including Great Yarmouth and will be presented at the Broads Authority meeting in July.

## 10. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Broads Local Access Forum would be held on Wednesday 4 September 2024 at 10.00am. The location is to be confirmed.

The meeting ended at 11.50am.

Signed by

Chair



# Broads Local Access Forum

04 September 2024

Agenda item number 6

## Summary of progress 04.09.2024

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> <p><b>June 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
				<p><b>August 2023:</b> The Chair agreed to raise the request on behalf of the Forum at the next Norfolk Local Access Forum Rights of Way subgroup meeting.</p> <p><b>November 2023:</b> The Norfolk Local Access Forum supports the request, but the focus needs to be on contacting officers at Norfolk County Council.</p> <p><b>March 2024:</b> Waterways and Recreation Officer agreed to review the areas where paths are at risk of erosion to the river or vulnerable to flooding, and report back to the Forum.</p> <p><b>June 2024:</b> Waterways and Recreation Officer agreed to present the report at the next meeting.</p>	
Staithe Report	04/12/2019		Contact the Environment Agency asking their opinion as a follow-up from the publication of the staithe 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 staithe of interest to the Forum and contact the EA.</p>	In progress

Title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Summary of actions	Progress so far	Status
				<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> <p><b>August 2023:</b> The new Waterways and Recreation Officer will compare staithe in the Broads which are on EA owned land.</p> <p><b>June 2024:</b> The Broads Authority are in discussion with the Environment Agency about taking over the management of a public staithe in the Broads.</p>	
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> <p><b>April 2023:</b> DoSS responded to the BLAF Chair requesting more details about the request from the Forum.</p>	In progress

Title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Summary of actions	Progress so far	Status
				<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> <p><b>August 2023:</b> The Chair agreed to send a letter to the Director of Strategic Services sharing the views of the Forum.</p> <p><b>March 2024:</b> Waterways and Recreation Officer agreed to request an update on bathing water designation at Falcon Meadow from the River Waveney Trust.</p> <p><b>June 2024:</b> Waterways and Recreation Officer agreed to contact Anglian Water to understand what the free sampling kits are testing for.</p>	

Date of report: 28 August 2024



# Broads Local Access Forum

04 September 2024

Agenda item number 7

## Paths lost to the River

Report by Waterways and Recreation Officer

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### Summary

A report relating to the ongoing issue of paths in the Broads being lost to the river due to erosion, the history of the issue and proposed next steps.

### Recommendation

Bring the issue to the attention of local MPs and Councillors.

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The issues of “paths lost to the river” in the Broads were first brought to the attention of the BLAF in June 2021 by Richard Atkins relating to Surlingham Footpath 1 and Bramerton Footpath 5.

## 2. Legal considerations

- 2.1. The legal situation around Public Rights of Way being lost to erosion in coastal areas and on riverbanks are quite different.
- 2.2. Public Rights of Way are public highways and are protected by law, under the Highways Act 1980. It is an offence for anyone to close a public right of way, or to disturb or damage the surface without lawful authority. In the Broads, the county councils as the Highways Authorities are the legal bodies with responsibility for rights of way matters.
- 2.3. According to the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, part 9, section 302. Insert from the 1949 Act relating to long-distance routes, section 55B, *Route subject to erosion etc.:*

*2) Where Natural England considers that the area through which the route passes is an area to which subsection (3) applies, the report may set out proposals for the route, or any part of it, to be determined at any time in accordance with provision made in the proposals (rather than as shown on a map).*

*(3) This subsection applies to an area if it is or may be—*

*(a) subject to significant coastal erosion or encroachment by the sea, or*

*(b) subject to significant physical change due to other geomorphological processes.*

*(4) The provision made by virtue of subsection (2) may, in particular, provide for the route to be determined by reference to the edge of a cliff or boundary of a field (as it exists from time to time).*

*(5) Where the report contains proposals under subsection (2), the map included in the report in accordance with section 51(2) must show the route as determined, at the time the report is prepared, in accordance with those proposals.*

*(6) Natural England must consult the Environment Agency before exercising its powers under subsection (2) in respect of an area which is or may be—*

*(a) subject to significant coastal erosion or encroachment by the sea, or*

*(b) subject to significant physical change due to other geomorphological processes in relation to which the Agency has functions. ([Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#))*

- 2.4. When it comes to riverside paths rather than coastal paths, there is not the same legislation to move paths with the erosion which means that paths can be rerouted but not necessarily following the river.
- 2.5. *A Public Right of Way which appears on a Definitive Map or Statement can be diverted or extinguished by a legal process whereby a local authority makes a Public Path Order. The County Council has a power (and not a duty) to make Public Path Orders under sections 26, 118 and 119 of the Highways Act 1980. These orders, once confirmed, have the effect of permanently creating, extinguishing or diverting Footpaths, Bridleways or Restricted Byways respectively.*
- 2.6. *A Council is under no obligation to make an Order. Extending this further, if the Council decides to make an order it is again under no duty to refer it to the Secretary of State for the Environment, should objections be received. ([Public Path Orders \(diversions and extinguishments\) - Norfolk County Council](#))*

### 3. Issues raised to Norfolk County Council

- 3.1. Both Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils have online portals with which to raise highways related problems.
- 3.2. Norfolk County Council shared some of their 2023 data which showed that the same paths in the Broads are being flagged as flooded, namely paths in Geldeston and Honing, and the Weaver Way.
- 3.3. There are 10 paths in the Broads which have been rerouted and therefore been flagged to be extinguished. Originally 14 were identified and rerouted but 4 were extinguished before 2020.

## 4. Conclusion

- 4.1. There is not the same legislation around paths lost to riverbank erosion as there is for coastal erosion. Paths flooding and being lost to the river will continue to be a problem with climate change and the predicted rise in water levels and rainfall patterns. Communication with local MPs about the concerns around losing Public Rights of Way to bank erosion on inland waterways could raise this issue to those who have the power to make changes to policies, which could mean that similar legislation to that for coastal paths could be considered for riverside paths.

Author: Jo Thompson

Date of report: 19 August 2024

# Broads Local Access Forum

04 September 2024

Agenda item number 8

## Active Travel England

Report by Waterways and Recreation Officer

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### Summary

Recap of what the Active Travel England project involves and how it is progressing.

### Recommendation

Share your thoughts on the infrastructure of walking and cycling routes in the Broads executive area.

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Broads Authority is embarking on the development of a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) aimed at enhancing active travel within the Broads National Park. This project will align with the existing Norfolk and Suffolk LCWIPs and consider additional integrations with other local LCWIPs. Our focus will be on addressing the unique active travel needs of smaller rural and semi-rural areas within the Broads, with the intent to substantially increase walking and cycling by leveraging synergies with public transport providers such as the Norfolk Community Rail Partnership.

## 2. Project Objectives

- 2.1. Develop a comprehensive LCWIP that is harmonised with the Norfolk and Suffolk LCWIPs.
- 2.2. Focus on unique needs and opportunities for active travel in rural and semi-rural communities within the Broads.
- 2.3. Foster partnerships with public transport providers to create a seamless active travel network.
- 2.4. Achieve significant community and stakeholder engagement through a two-stage consultation process.
- 2.5. Position the Broads LCWIP as a catalyst for achieving a 50% increase in land-based active travel by 2030.

### 3. Financial implications

- 3.1. The project is fully funded by the Active Travel England Capability Fund. Every National Park has been awarded £100,000 to create a Local, Cycling, Walking and Wheeling Infrastructure Plan for their area. The money is purely for the plan, any projects which come out of the plan will need to have funding from another source.

### 4. Progress

- 4.1. We are currently on the first stage of the LCWIP consultation which consists of an online consultation dispersed through targeted advertising. Engagement with parish councils, local walking organisations, businesses, and public transport providers. Workshops and targeted meetings to gather detailed feedback and integrate specific needs into planning.
- 4.2. The next stage will be tasking a consultant to develop feasibility studies and project initiation documents based on the data collected. These will then form a large part of the draft LCWIP.

### 5. Conclusion

- 5.1. While we are in the consultation phase of the project we need the opinions of as many people as possible. Please give your opinions on walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure around the Broads and encourage others to do the same. The link to the consultation is here [Consultations \(broads-authority.gov.uk\)](https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/consultations)

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[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.