

# Broads Authority

19 November 2021

Agenda item number 8

## Responding to Climate Change

Report by Chief Executive, Head of Communications and CANAPE Project Manager

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### Purpose

Inspired by the COP26 meeting in Glasgow where a joint statement was signed by many protected and conserved areas (including National Parks UK), this report summarises the Authority's existing initiatives and discusses how the Authority, working with others, could encourage residents, visitors and local companies to help combat climate change and biodiversity loss.

### Broads Plan context

Various themes, including A. Managing water resources and flood risk, B. Sustaining landscapes for biodiversity and agriculture, G. Connecting and inspiring people, and H. Building 'climate smart' communities.

### Recommended decision

1. Note the content of the joint statement of protected and conserved areas around the world on climate change and biodiversity; and
  2. In principle, to support the National Parks' involvement as a hub in the 'Count Us In' initiative and work with local media, local authorities, Broads Tourism (Visit the Broads) and partners to promote the development of 'Broads specific' actions, linked to the 16 'Count us in' themes, to residents and visitors to help tackle climate change and biodiversity loss in the Broads in order to develop behaviour change messaging
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## Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. The 'protected and conserved areas' joint statement and Count Us In initiative	3
3. 16 steps to reduce carbon pollution and persuade others to do the same	4
4. Financial implications	6
5. Risk implications	6
6. Conclusion	6

# 1. Introduction

1.1. In September 2019, the Broads Authority agreed to recognise a climate emergency with a timeline for developing an action plan with a carbon audit and baseline. A follow-up report was presented to Broads Authority members in July 2020, with an update on progress, and the adoption of an action plan, including engaging with organisations that have responsibility for emissions in the Broads area to map a route towards zero carbon.

1.2. In a 2019 [statement](#), National Park authorities committed to achieving carbon neutrality, in line with government net-zero targets. They have agreed an ambition to achieve net-zero by no later than 2030.

1.3. Responding to the challenges posed by climate change, in both reducing greenhouse gas emission and adapting to the changes it will bring about, is central stage in the current Broads Plan and the Authority is making some progress on a number of fronts:

**Mitigation – to reduce or prevent emissions of greenhouse gases or carbon capture**

1.4. Smallworld work – In Partnership with the National Parks Family, we are working with Smallworld consulting to develop a model of consumption-based emissions from National parks and the Broads. The Consumption footprint is particularly interesting for areas like the Broads, as it isn't limited to just the emissions within the Broads, but captures the full impact of the visitor economy, including people travelling to the Broads as a destination.

1.5. Research – DfT project Electrifying the Broads (ETB) – The ETB partnership is writing a feasibility study to determine the infrastructure needs for a fully electric hire cruiser to operate on the Broads. This partnership includes Ren Energy, Norfolk Broads Direct, Net-Zero East, Hethel Innovation, and the Broads Authority.

1.6. Research – We are supporting the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology NERC funded project “GHG Aqua”, which is studying the emissions from inland waters. They have carried out some initial surveys in the Broads, which will help us understand if the open water areas in the Broads are likely to be methane emitters, and the relationship between this and their water quality.

1.7. Creating A New Approach to Peatland Ecosystems (CANAPE) – through our Interreg Project, we have developed concepts with partners across Europe for more sustainable use of peatlands, including “Paludiculture”, the practice of wetland farming. If Paludiculture is practiced in place of farming on drained peatlands, it can save up to 40 tonnes of CO2 emission per hectare.

Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil – in 2021 we began trialling the use of HVO fuel in our construction and maintenance equipment. This is a biofuel produced from waste cooking oil that is a drop-in replacement for Gas Oil (aka Red Diesel). This has the potential to save over 100 tonnes a year of CO2 emissions, although in the long term

we still need to switch to zero emission equipment when it becomes available, due to the knock-on land use issues and inherently limited global supply of biofuels.

### **Adaptation - to help us cope with the impacts of climate change and become more resilient with climate change**

- 1.8. Broadland Futures Initiatives. One key goal of the project is for the Broads to become more resilient with the increased risk of flood risk due to climate change. A public [report](#) has been published to highlight the future impact of climate change.
- 1.9. Water Resources East (WRE). The East of England region is under pressure from population growth, climate change and the need to enhance the environment. WRE are working in partnership to safeguard a sustainable supply of water for the Eastern England, resilient to future challenges and enabling the area's communities, environment and economy to reach their full potential.

### **Advocacy**

- 1.10. In the month when COP has been held in Glasgow, this report asks whether the Authority could be doing more – in particular in advocating changes in behaviour to our visitors and residents.

## **2. The 'protected and conserved areas' joint statement and 'Count Us In' initiative**

- 2.1. On 5 November, many organisations in charge of some of the largest tracts of protected landscapes and marine environments across the world came together for the first time to call upon world leaders to support their work at the vanguard of the fight against Climate Change and Biodiversity loss. Orchestrated by National Parks UK, as host nation for COP26, the statement was signed by, amongst others, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)/ World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), EUROPARC, Parks Canada and the United States National Park Service. The statement notes:

*“As a family of Protected and Conserved Areas we recognise that no single site or organisation can address the global crisis of climate change nor the exacerbating impact of climate change on biodiversity loss. “*

*“[This family] is well placed to respond to the calls to action from the IPCC, IPBES, IRP and UNEP and to support the ambition of countries around the world, including the G7 and the members of the HAC, by taking rapid and far-reaching actions to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss.”*

*“We can be the first 30 percent that inspires and informs land and sea use choices across the remainder of the planet, and we can be the places where billions of people connect with nature and become inspired to play an active part in combatting the dual crises.”*

The full text of the statement can be read [here](#).

- 2.2. 'Count Us In' is a non-for-profit initiative, funded by philanthropic donations and set up by partners through pro-bono work. Partners of 'Count Us In' have to meet four essential criteria:

**Be credible in their climate change action**

Be a leader in your sector, and mobilize your ecosystem to address climate change. Global corporate partners must have made a Net Zero commitment. If feasible, we encourage SME, sports organization, university, city, faith organization, and other partners to map out a pathway to join the [Race to Zero campaign](#).

**Commit to meaningful action as part of Count Us In**

This will be different for each partner based on their organisation and ecosystem, and we will work out with each partner what that means to them, and how best to leverage their contribution to the campaign for launch and beyond in phases.

**Be visible as part of Count Us In (CUI)**

Put your organisation's name and brand on the CUI website and communications, and share your participation in CUI with your audience.

**Uphold the Values and Principles of CUI**

This will be different for each partner based on their organisation and ecosystem, and we will work out with each partner what that means to them, and how best to leverage their contribution to the campaign for launch and beyond in phases.

- 2.3. The 'Count Us In' initiative is based on 16 steps are the most effective way to reduce carbon pollution, which are explained in section 3.
- 2.4. At the heart of 'Count Us In' are a series of Hubs that sign up to inspire their communities. The Hubs are taking steps and promoting the project in their own neighbourhoods and networks.
- 2.5. Our National Parks UK Communications Team is exploring whether the UK's National Parks could become a hub for the 'Count Us In' initiative. More details can be found at [Count Us In \(count-us-in.org\)](http://count-us-in.org)

### 3. 16 steps to reduce carbon pollution and persuade others to do the same

- 3.1. 16 Steps have been selected with experts from the UN Environment Programme based on 3 criteria: their impact on your personal carbon pollution, their power to influence leaders and their ability to involve everyone. The Broads Authority has the potential to influence 8 million visitors, 6,000 residents, 300 employees, volunteers and their families and numerous partner organisations.
- 3.2. We can use the 16 steps as a tool to inform Authority activity but also to advocate change to our visitors, local communities and partners. Some examples of relevant

Authority activity are shown below. Whilst the list is not exhaustive it does illustrate that there may be more the Authority can do. A similar approach can be used to develop actions that we can encourage others to take within the Broads as part of a behaviour change campaign:

<b>16 steps</b>	<b>Broads Authority response to date</b>
Fly less	Our business travel policy specifies that travelling by plane will not be acceptable, except in exceptional circumstances with permission needed from the Chief Executive
Drive electric	The Authority now runs 7 electric vehicles Electrifying the Broads project Installation of electric charging points at moorings and yacht stations
Insulate your home	Review of office space to take place in light of reduced capacity requirements
Wear clothes to last	Columbia was selected as a clothing supplier for National Parks because of their corporate responsibility and positive change policies Clothing is re-used where possible
Tell your politicians	The CEO included an item on climate change at the Norfolk Leaders meeting
Walk and cycle more	Cycle to work policy and pool bicycle at Yare House Limited staff parking at Yare house Yare House location close to train station and bus routes Developing new cycle routes around the Broads
Cut food waste	Food waste collected from BA kitchen and composted in local allotments by staff
Green your money	Review of Investment Strategy Find out about the investments made by the Norfolk Pension Fund
Repair and reuse	Maintain construction equipment for at least 15 years Re-engine rather than replace boats Maintain cars for 10 years ICT take measures such as installing additional ram and SSD cards to keep older computers running
Dial it down (reducing energy waste)	Green energy tariff Fleeces are provided to all staff

<b>16 steps</b>	<b>Broads Authority response to date</b>
Speak out at work	The carbon reduction project manager engages with most teams across the organisation.
Talk to friends	The carbon reduction project manager engages with local authorities across Norfolk and Suffolk, and parishes in the Broads area
Eat more plants	Oat milk provided at work Investigate vegan ice cream for tourism information centres
Eat seasonal	N/A
Switch your energy	Switched to green suppliers for our electricity Trialling use of HVO as a diesel substitute
Get some solar	Examining the potential for solar panels on Dockyard building

## 4. Financial implications

- 4.1. At this point we don't have a costing for a promotional campaign to residents and visitors, which would be run in collaboration with the local media and partners, but it is likely that it can be funded from existing resources.

## 5. Risk implications

- 5.1. Working with partners would reduce the risks of working on a media campaign based on 'Count Us In'.

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1. The Authority is making progress in reducing its carbon footprint. There is a big opportunity to engage with residents and visitors and provide them with information about how they act in their own lives. Working with the local media, local authorities across the Norfolk and Broads tourism sector would make this more effective.

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Date of report: 08 November 2021

[Broads Plan](#) strategic actions: Various