

# Navigation Committee

15 April 2021

Agenda item number 10

## Chief Executive's report and current issues

Report by Chief Executive

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### Purpose

To give a briefing on significant matters relating to the maintenance and management of the waterways, and allow members to raise any such issues.

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### 1. Response to Covid-19 emergency

- 1.1. Guidance issued from the Government on the 'Roadmap out of lockdown' has been difficult to interpret, particularly for the use of day boats. The relevant boating organisations have been working together to offer consistent advice, and the

Authority's website is updated regularly with the latest information. A large number of visitors are expected in the area over the summer.

## **2. Mutford Lock**

- 2.1. The Statutory Instrument was laid in Parliament on 21 January for the transfer of Mutford Lock. This came into force on 19 February, meaning the transfer is now finally complete. This constitutes a significant change, with Mutford Lock now in the Authority's ownership and part of its navigation area.

## **3. Carrow Road Bridge repairs**

- 3.1. Carrow Road Bridge was constructed in 1923 to carry the A147 (Carrow Road) Norwich Ring Road over the River Wensum. The bridge has a single leaf bascule rolling lifting span which, when open, allows tall vessels to pass on their way to the Port of Norwich. The bridge has a 4.27m (14ft) clearance at average high water.
- 3.2. In 1995, the bridge deck was waterproofed with Acme plywood deck panels, a propriety system with a panel surface having a high-skid resistant coating pre-applied. This decking system is now failing, with most of the original (1995) panels being replaced through maintenance carried out under emergency weekend road closures. These bridge deck repairs and weekend closures are becoming more frequent and expensive.
- 3.3. Norfolk County Council, the owner of the bridge, published a report to its Cabinet on 8 March regarding the bridge's future maintenance. The report indicates that the Council proposes to carry out major repairs to the bridge deck, and at the same time fix the bridge into position, during the summer of 2022. According to the report, sealing the bridge shut will minimise disruption to highways users and reduce Council maintenance costs. Section 2.2.7 of the report states that "the bridge will be unable to open to enable tall vessels to pass through and therefore, given the limit of navigation, is only proposed as a temporary solution".
- 3.4. The Council has a legal duty to open the bridge to river traffic, and members may have significant concerns about a proposal that would prevent the bridge from lifting, even in the short-term. The fact that there has been a very limited number of times when the bridge has been lifted for boats in recent years does not reflect the demand for larger boats to access the port of Norwich.
- 3.5. The Broads Authority welcomed the Council's intention to consult it on options for repairing the bridge and the costs involved, and looks forward to seeing these.
- 3.6. Officers met with the Council following publication of the report, and it became clear that the information the Authority would need to come to a view on this matter would not be available in time for today's Navigation Committee. We have therefore agreed with the Council's officers that we will bring a detailed report to the next meeting.

## **4. Safety videos**

- 4.1. The boating essentials videos have been completed and are available to view on the Broads Authority website at [Boating essentials \(broads-authority.gov.uk\)](https://broads-authority.gov.uk), and YouTube channel [Broads Authority - YouTube](#).

## **5. Boat Safety Management Group meeting – 1 March 2021**

- 5.1. The Boat Safety Management Group (BSMG) were informed of a fatality that occurred on Saturday 27 February 2021 at Horsted Mill, on the west bank, just outside of the Broads Authority navigation footprint. Rangers were involved in looking for a craft in the water but none was found.
- 5.2. Members discussed the number of reported incidents, which were lower than normal from October 2020 – February 2021 due to the lockdown restrictions.
- 5.3. It was also reported to the group that the Hire Boat Code was due to be launched by 1 April 2021 with compliance requirements to be implemented for 2022.
- 5.4. Since the BSMG meeting on 1 March, the practical training for hire boat operators on Breydon Water has been delivered. A very successful training event delivered by Broads Authority Rangers and Quay Assistants, supported by MCA and the RNLI. Feedback from attendees has been excellent and due to further demand another training day has been requested.

## **6. Navigation patrolling and performance targets**

- 6.1. Rangers have continued to patrol over the latest lockdown period in line with winter targets (Appendix 2). The figures for exercise of powers (Appendix 1) are very low, reflecting the amount of river traffic currently permitted to use the navigation. Overall this year, the patrolling figures are much higher than normal, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic that has restricted some National Park elements of the role such as events and education with school groups, and higher use of the waterways over the summer. There were a number of successful prosecutions over this period for navigation offences (Appendix 5).

## **7. Sunken and abandoned vessel update**

- 7.1. The latest position on abandoned and sunken vessels is at Appendix 3. There were a number of vessels sunk in the Thorpe area over this period due to high water levels and boats not being visited regularly. Two of these had to be dealt with quickly, as they were in the navigation channel causing a hazard.

## **8. Planning enforcement update**

- 8.1. There are no further enforcement matters with navigation implications to report.

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Date of report: 31 March 2021

Appendix 1 – Rangers exercise of powers analysis January – March 2021

Appendix 2 – Ranger duties total time allocated and actual days

Appendix 3 – Sunken and abandoned vessels current position as at 25 March  
2021 25/03/2021

Appendix 4 – Prosecutions dealt with in court for non-payment of tolls since 14/01/2021

Appendix 5 – Prosecutions dealt with in court for navigation offences since 01/01/2021 14  
January 2020

## Appendix 1 – Rangers exercise of powers analysis January – March 2021

**Table 1**

<b>Verbal warnings</b>	<b>Wroxham launch</b> Wroxham and upper Bure	<b>Irstead launch</b> Ant	<b>Ludham launch</b> Hickling, Potter Heigham, upper Thurne	<b>Ludham launch 2</b> lower Thurne and lower Bure	<b>Norwich launch</b> Norwich and upper Yare	<b>Hardley Launch</b> Reedham, Chet and middle Yare	<b>Burgh St Peter launch</b> Oulton Broad and upper/middle Waveney	<b>Breydon launch</b> Breydon water, lower Waveney and Yare
Care and caution	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Speed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Table 2**

<b>Written warnings</b>	<b>Wroxham launch</b>	<b>Irstead launch</b>	<b>Ludham launch</b>	<b>Ludham launch 2</b>	<b>Norwich launch</b>	<b>Hardley Launch</b>	<b>Burgh St Peter launch</b>	<b>Breydon launch</b>
Care and caution	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Speed	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Special directions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Table 3**

Launch patrols	Wroxham launch	Irstead launch	Ludham launch	Ludham launch 2	Norwich launch	Hardley Launch	Burgh St Peter launch	Breydon launch
Launch staffed by ranger	34	27	32	26	32	23	17	34
Volunteer patrols	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
IRIS reports	4	2	1		9	4	3	

**Table 4**

Broads Control total calls

Contact method	Number of calls
Telephone	4059
VHF	251
<b>Total</b>	<b>4310</b>

## Appendix 2 – Ranger duties: total time allocated and actual days

**Table 1**

Broads Authority corporate duties

Work area	Actual days to date
Training	260.26
Broads Control	311.79
Team meetings, work planning	634.23
Partnership working	13.82
Assisting other sections	34.90
Billets and boatsheds	28.38
Launch – general	27.36
Trailers - general	1.42
Vehicle maintenance	7.50
Other equipment repair	24.30
<b>Total</b>	<b>1343.96</b>

**Table 2**

Navigation duties

Work area	Actual days to date
Patrolling	1245.71
Escorts	62.70
Prosecution files	41.96
Bankside tree management	169.76
Obstruction removal	16.49
Channel markers and buoys	9.59
Signs and boards maintenance	50.41
Adjacent waters	68.16
Reactive mooring maintenance	31.55
<b>Total</b>	<b>1696.33</b>

**Table 3**

Conservation, recreation, countryside maintenance

Work area	Actual days to date
Fen management	96.18
Lake, riverbank restoration	48.92
Invasive species control	8.11
Other conservation work	39.12
Pollution response	9.05
Visitor site maintenance	247.16
Public engagement	0.54
Public footpath work	5.34
Education work	0.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>454.76</b>

**Team total up to 22 March 2021**

Percentage Navigation: 79%

Percentage National Park: 21%



## Appendix 3 – Sunken and abandoned vessels current position as at 25 March 2021

Description	Location found	Action	Notice affixed	Result
Motor Cruiser	River Yare, old River Thorpe	Vessel Sunk at owners mooring	No	Not affecting the navigation
Motor Cruiser	Sutton/Stalham Cut	Liaising with the landowner, vessel not in the navigation channel	No	Landowner to remove top section.
Workboat	River Yare, Thorpe Island	Vessel sunk at mooring	No	Liaising with owner to raise
Motor Cruiser	Thorpe	Sunken vessel	Yes	Vessel removed
Motor Cruiser	Drifting at Reedham	Abandoned vessel	Yes	Vessel removed
Motor Cruiser	River Yare, Thorpe Island	Vessel sunk at mooring	Yes	Vessel removed
Yacht	River Yare, Thorpe Island	Vessel sunk at mooring	Yes	Vessel removed
Motor Cruiser	River Yare, Thorpe Island	Vessel sunk at mooring	Yes	Notice issued

## Appendix 4 – Prosecutions dealt with in court for non-payment of tolls since 14 January 2020

Type of vessel	Vessel name	Fined	Costs awarded	Victim surcharge	Compensation
Houseboat	Silver Dawn	£350.00	£182.00	£35.00	£83.50
Auxiliary Yacht	Fogster	-	£232.40	-	N/A toll paid prior to court hearing
Motor Boat	Forlorn Hope	£440.00	£190.00	£44.00	£117.48
Dory	Unregistered Vessel	£440.00	£166.00	£44.00	£69.90
Motor Boat	Unregistered Vessel	-	-	-	£153.78
Motor Boat	Lola	-	£160.00	-	£461.34

## Appendix 5 – Prosecutions dealt with in court for navigation offences since 01 January 2021

Type of vessel	Vessel name	Fined	Costs awarded	Victim surcharge	Compensation
Speed Boat	Yeah Buoy	£650	£400	£65	
Bayliner Speed Boat	Disco Volante	£1000	£500	£100	
Speed Boat	Beaver Las Vegas	£800	£464	£80	
Speed Boat	Blue un- named	£990	£1045	£33	