

Broads Authority Boat Dwellers Accommodation Assessment

Final Report
August 2022

RRR Consultancy Ltd



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Executive Summary

Introduction

- S1. The Broads Authority commissioned *RRR Consultancy Ltd* to undertake a Boat Dwellers Accommodation Assessment (BDAA). The results will inform policy development in housing and planning and to inform the allocation of resources within the planning authority area.
- S2. The need for local authorities to consider the accommodation needs of households residing in houseboats is determined by the Housing and Planning Act (2016). Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) (as it was then called) draft guidance on periodically reviewing the housing needs for caravans and houseboats was published March 2016. It provides advice on how to consider the accommodation needs of people residing in caravans or houseboats where they differ from those of the settled community.
- S3. The purpose of this assessment is to quantify the accommodation and housing related support needs of boat dwellers in the Broads Authority planning authority area. This in terms of both permanent residential moorings and short-stay moorings for boat dwellers. The results will be used to inform the allocation of resources and as an evidence base for policy development in housing and planning.

Definitions

- S4. Section 124 (4) of the Housing and Planning Act (2016) defines a “houseboat” as a boat or similar structure designed or adapted for use as a place to live. This assessment also adopts the Broads Authority definition of “residential moorings” where those living on boats moor, as:

“one where someone lives aboard a vessel (which is capable of navigation), that the vessel is used as the main residence and where that vessel is moored in one location for more than 28 days in a year. The vessel may occasionally/periodically go cruising and return to base”.

- S5. This BDAA also incorporates the National Bargee Travellers Association’s (NBTA) definition who define a boat dweller as:

“Someone who lives aboard a vessel (which may or may not be capable of navigation), that the vessel is used as the main or only residence and where that vessel is either (i) moored in one location for more than 28 days in a year (but may occasionally or periodically leave its mooring); or (ii) has no permanent mooring and navigates in accordance with the statutes appropriate to the navigation such as inter alia s.17(3)(c)(ii) of the British Waterways Act 1995 or s.79 of the Thames Conservancy Act 1932”.

Accommodation need

- S6. Accommodation need for the study area was assessed using analysis of primary and secondary data. The accommodation needs calculation steps are based on a model in accordance with both previous and current Practice Guidance issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG)¹. It contains seven basic components, five assessing need and two assessing supply, which are applied to each sub-group, based on secondary data.
- S7. Table S.1 summarises number of permanent residential moorings required over the period 2021-41. It shows that a further 48 permanent residential moorings are needed over the period throughout the authority.

Table S.1 Permanent residential moorings need 2021-41	
	No.
2021-2026	45
2026-2031	1
2031-2036	1
2036-2041	1
Total	48

Broads Authority BDAA 2022

- S8. In relation to transit provision, there is a need to consider more flexibility in relation to short-stay moorings where those living on boats can stay temporarily, particularly during the winter months.

Conclusions

- S9. Finally, this report recommends that the Broads Authority works jointly with other relevant service providers where appropriate to address boat dwellers' accommodation needs. The other recommendations are as follows:

New mooring places and sites

- Contact the marina owners and managers in the Broads Authority area to discuss the possibility of some leisure berths being granted planning permission for permanent residential moorings.
- Develop criteria and processes for determining the suitability of boat dwellers' residential moorings for including in emerging/future Local Plans.

¹ DCLG Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessments, October 2007 located at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7838/accommneedsassessments.pdf

- Agencies could consider helping to meet the needs of households unable to afford to own a mooring or the rental costs of existing moorings by renting or leasing small parcels of local authority owned land to them and assisting with planning applications and mooring development.
- To consider alternative funding mechanisms such as: acquisition funds; loans for private mooring provision through Community Development Financial Institutions; and joint ventures with members of the boating community.
- To determine whether some of the accommodation needs of boat dwellers can be met by affordable or supported housing.

Mooring services and facilities

- Ensure all mooring areas have access to facilities such as toilet and household waste disposal provisions. If possible, all authorised moorings (residential and visitors' moorings) should have access to electric and water hook-up points, and for residential moorings to have individual access and a secure post-box.
- To work with other agencies, in order to review the enforcement processes that are in operation.

Communication and cooperation

- Formalise communication processes between relevant housing, planning and enforcement officers etc. in both the study area and neighbouring local authorities.
- For agencies to develop a holistic vision for their work on boat dwelling services and facilities, and to embed it in Community and Homelessness Strategies, Local Plans and planning and reporting obligations under the Equality Act 2010.
- Provide training and workshop sessions with service provider employees (and elected members) to help them to further understand the key issues facing the boat dwellers.
- The population size and demographics of the boating community groups can change rapidly. As such, their accommodation needs should be reviewed every 5 to 7 years.

1. Introduction

Study context

- 1.1 The Broads Authority commissioned *RRR Consultancy Ltd* to undertake a Boat Dwellers Accommodation Assessment (BDAA) for the planning authority's Local Plan period of 2021 to 2041.
- 1.2 The requirement to assess the accommodation needs of boat dwellers follows the introduction, in the Housing and Planning Act 2016, of a requirement to consider the needs of people residing on places on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored². Also, in March 2016 DCLG published its draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs for caravans and houseboats.
- 1.3 *RRR* consultancy calculated the residential mooring need for the Broads Authority to support the currently adopted Local Plan 2019. That study was completed in 2017³. This work provides an updated needs figure to support the review of the Local Plan for the Broads.

Methodological context

- 1.4 To achieve the study aims, the research drew on a number of data sources including:
 - Review of secondary information: a review of national and local planning policies and analysis of secondary data.
 - Consultation with stakeholders including housing and planning officers, boat yard owners and managers, and the National Bargee Travellers Association.
 - Consultation with boat dwellers.

Geographical context

- 1.5 Figure 1.1 shows the extent of waterways within the Broads Authority administrative boundary:

² s124 Housing and Planning Act 2016 (c. 22) p.58

³ See: https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0027/243954/Norfolk-Final-ANA-October-9th-2017.pdf

Figure 1.2 Broads Authority Executive Area Map



Source: Broads Authority 2019

Broads Authority profile

- 1.6 The Broads is an internationally important wetland and designated protected landscape of the highest order with a status equivalent to that of a National Park. The designated Broads Authority Executive Area covers parts of Norfolk and North Suffolk. The Executive Area includes parts of Broadland District, South Norfolk District, North Norfolk District, Great Yarmouth Borough, Norwich City, and East Suffolk Council area. The councils for those areas do not have planning powers in the Broads area, but retain all other local authority powers and responsibilities. Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council are the county planning authority for their respective part of the Broads, with responsibilities that include minerals and waste planning and are also the Lead Local Flood Authority.
- 1.7 The Broads Authority is a Special Statutory Authority, established under the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988. It has a statutory duty to manage the Broads for three purposes, none of which takes precedence:
- Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Broads;
 - Promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Broads by the public; and
 - Protecting the interests of navigation.
- 1.8 A primary aspect of the Broads is that it is a nationally designated area, protected and enhanced for the benefit of the nation as well as for the local population and businesses. This is the justification for control of local planning within the designated area to be entrusted to a special purpose body that includes representation of the national interest as well as of local councils and navigators.
- 1.9 Tourism is the mainstay of the Broads' economy. In 2015, the Broads and surrounding area (including the area of influence) received around 7.4 million visitors, bringing an estimated £431 million and directly supporting more than 7,200 FTE jobs. Land and water-based tourism is important in the area with around 12,173 boats on the Broads in 2015 (10,691 private craft and 1,482 hire craft). Many people also enjoy bird watching, walking, cycling, angling, visiting heritage sites and just being near the water.
- 1.10 The local economy is not entirely tourism related. Agriculture is the predominant business use in terms of land area, if not in numbers employed or monetary value, and has a vital role in maintaining the landscape and its aesthetic and environmental value. Boat building is also a locally important traditional industry⁴.

⁴ Local Plan for the Broads Plan period 2015 – 2036, Adopted May 2019, pp.7-9.

Definition Context

- 1.11 The Housing and Planning Act 2016 requires Local Housing Authorities (LHAs) to consider the needs of people residing on places on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored. Section 124 (4) of the Housing and Planning Act (2016) defines a “houseboat” as a boat or similar structure designed or adapted for use as a place to live.
- 1.12 This assessment also adopts the Broads Authority definition of “residential moorings” where those living on boats moor, as:
- “one where someone lives aboard a vessel (which is capable of navigation), that the vessel is used as the main residence and where that vessel is moored in one location for more than 28 days in a year. The vessel may occasionally/periodically go cruising and return to base”.
- 1.13 This BDAA also incorporates the National Bargee Travellers Association’s (NBTA) definition who define a boat dweller as:
- “Someone who lives aboard a vessel (which may or may not be capable of navigation), that the vessel is used as the main or only residence and where that vessel is either (i) moored in one location for more than 28 days in a year (but may occasionally or periodically leave its mooring); or (ii) has no permanent mooring and navigates in accordance with the statutes appropriate to the navigation such as inter alia s.17(3)(c)(ii) of the British Waterways Act 1995 or s.79 of the Thames Conservancy Act 1932”.
- 1.14 The NBTA also determine that people who use boats for recreation and whose main home is bricks and mortar, or who owns or rent bricks and mortar homes, should not be classed as a boat dweller, regardless of the amount of time each year that they spend on boats. That person should be classed as a 'leisure boater', because they are not in need of a place to moor their home either temporarily or permanently. However, leisure boaters may need to access services and facilities along rivers and canals whilst residing on boats. As such, whilst the legislation requires the need for houseboats to be assessed, in real terms, for the Local Plan for the Broads, this need is expressed as number of residential moorings.

Policy Context

- 1.15 To assess the current position, existing documents have been examined to determine what reference is made to boat dwellers’ issues. The intention is to highlight areas of effective practice in the study area, and examine the extent to which local authorities are currently addressing the issue. Furthermore, understanding the current position will be important in the development of future strategies intended to meet accommodation need and housing related support need among boat dwellers.

National legislation and guidance

Housing and Planning Act 2016

1.16 The Housing and Planning Act gained Royal Assent on 12 May 2016. Section 124 of the Act states that:

“In the case of a local housing authority in England, the duty under subsection (1) includes a duty to consider the needs of people residing in or resorting to their district with respect to the provision of –

- (a) sites on which caravans can be stationed, or
- (b) places on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored”.

1.17 Importantly, according to correspondence between *RRR Consultancy Ltd* and DCLG when undertaking the previous assessment (ANA 2017), DCLG stated that it is for local housing authorities to determine how to assess and understand the accommodation needs of people who reside in or resort to the area with respect to the provision of caravan sites or houseboats. This means that there is no “standard” methodology that can be followed i.e. it is for each authority to prepare (and justify) an appropriate methodology.

DCLG Review of housing needs for caravans and houseboats: draft guidance (March 2016)⁵

1.18 In March 2016 DCLG published its draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs for caravans and houseboats. It states that when considering the need for caravans and houseboats local authorities will need to include the needs of a variety of residents in differing circumstances, for example:

- Caravan and houseboat dwelling households:
 - who have no authorised site anywhere on which to reside
 - whose existing site accommodation is overcrowded or unsuitable, but who are unable to obtain larger or more suitable accommodation
 - who contain suppressed households who are unable to set up separate family units and
 - who are unable to access a place on an authorised site, or obtain or afford land to develop on.
- Bricks and mortar dwelling households:
 - Whose existing accommodation is overcrowded or unsuitable (‘unsuitable’ in this context can include unsuitability by virtue of a person’s cultural preference not to live in bricks-and-mortar accommodation).

⁵ See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-housing-needs-for-caravans-and-houseboats-draft-guidance>. Although it remains in draft form, correspondence to *RRR Consultancy* from the MHCLG dated 17 May 2021 confirms that the government remains committed to finalising the guidance.

- 1.19 The DCLG draft guidance recognises that the needs of those residing in caravans and houseboats may differ from the rest of the population because of:
- their nomadic or semi-nomadic pattern of life
 - their preference for caravan and houseboat-dwelling
 - movement between bricks-and-mortar housing and caravans or houseboats
 - their presence on unauthorised encampments or developments.
- 1.20 With the exception of the North Sea, there are no other navigable waterways linked to the Broads Authority waterways. As such, the BDAA assesses the accommodation needs of boat dwellers only residing on Broads Authority waterways.
- 1.21 The Guidance remains in draft form at the time of this BDAA, and so does not carry the same status as other guidance and legislation. It is unclear when – if at all – this guidance will lose its “draft” status. Nonetheless, it is of some value for those preparing accommodation needs assessments.

Summary

- 1.22 The need for Local Housing Authorities (LHAs) to consider the needs of people residing in houseboats is determined by the Housing and Planning Act (2016). In March 2016 the Government published draft guidance on periodically reviewing the housing needs for caravans and houseboats. It provides advice on how to consider the needs of people residing in caravans or houseboats where they differ from those of the settled community.
- 1.23 The purpose of this assessment is to quantify the accommodation and housing related support needs of boat dwellers in the Broads Authority administrative area between 2021 to 2041. This is in terms of both permanent residential moorings and short-stay moorings for boat dwellers. The results will be used to inform the allocation of resources and as an evidence base for policy development in housing and planning.

2. Consultation

Introduction

2.1 Consultations with a range of stakeholders were conducted over the period of the assessment and with boat dwellers. Themes raised through the consultations included: the main issues facing boat dwellers; the main barriers to delivering new mooring places; suitable places for new moorings; preferred type of mooring management; traveling patterns and transit mooring needs; the relationship between local boat dwellers and the settled community; and access to health, education and other services. This chapter presents brief summaries of the consultation and highlights the main points that were raised.

Boat Dwellers' Accommodation Needs

2.2 The main reasons why people choose to reside on boats were lifestyle choice, a lack of affordable or alternative housing, local connections, to be outdoors, to be mobile, for cultural reasons, and to escape mainstream society. Both boat dwellers and stakeholders commented on the main issues facing boat dwellers. Boat dwellers appreciate the sense of belonging fostered by the community and stated that this way of life may suit people who may not want to reside in one place or require a semi-permanent residence.

2.3 According to both boat dwellers and stakeholders, there are different categories of boat dwellers, including:

- long-term boat dwellers who have resided on the waterways for years, even second generation
- people who turn to it as an alternative form of housing accommodation
- people who turn to it following retirement
- people who try it for a year or two but then return to living in a house

2.4 Boat dwellers and stakeholders commented on how the household size across the study area varied between 1 person and 5 persons with most occupied by 1 or 2 people. They commented on how very few boats within the study area are permanently occupied by families with children. The age of boat dwellers residing on residential moorings ranged from early twenties to retirement age. They also commented on how boat dwellers derive from a broad range of social backgrounds with a similarly wide range of professions, skills and interests.

2.5 As well as those living on boats for 12 months of the year, it was highlighted that there is a growing demand for semi-permanent use. For example, there is a growth in the use of boats by students who live on boats whilst they study at the local university or college, and people who work in the area during the week but have an alternative address for the rest of the time.

2.6 It was acknowledged that there are very few permanent residential moorings in the Broads Authority area, compared to there being about 200 boat dwellers living on boats all year in

the area. This is a combination of households who choose to be constant cruisers i.e. do not require a residential mooring, and households in need of a residential mooring.

- 2.7 There are also boat dweller households who moor at marinas and boat yards and sleep on their boats at the moorings on an ad hoc basis. There is also an unknown number of boat dwellers residing on boats at the end of gardens and fields (including land the occupier owns) with the consent of the landowners but not necessarily with planning permission to live on board. Whilst planning permission is not required to moor boats at the end of properties, it is required for boats used for residency rather than leisure use.
- 2.8 Some commented on how not all people want permanent residential moorings, but more flexibility. The cost and requirements placed on providers of permanent residential moorings often put potential providers off from having such provision. They prefer to have non-permanent residential provision, allowing people to stay at the mooring for up to 10 out of 12 months. It was suggested that if the process and requirements to provide permanent residential moorings were more flexible, marinas and boat yards would be more inclined to provide them.
- 2.9 It was suggested that the lack of permanent residential moorings means that boat dwellers frequently overstay on 24-hour moorings. It was generally agreed that there is a lack of suitable facilities along local and neighbouring waterways. Some facilities are only available for a fee. There is a lack of access to toilet pumps and waste disposal facilities which are essential to ensure that the waterways are kept clean.

Barriers to new moorings

- 2.10 Barriers in relation to delivering new moorings were cited. Most land adjacent to waterways are not owned by the local authorities, so it may be difficult to deliver new moorings. Some commented on how potential providers (such as existing boat yards and marina owners) might be hesitant about providing permanent residential moorings. It was noted that some design requirements for permanent residential moorings could discourage potential providers. It was also suggested that some might be concerned about the impact and implication of having permanent residential moorings alongside their leisure moorings on one another and for the marina.
- 2.11 Marinas and yards are primarily privately owned. There are a number of private boat yards and marinas which have provision for residential boat dwellers and leisure cruisers as well as space for the storage and maintenance of boats. In relation to whether any new moorings should be owned and managed by the local authority, privately, or a combination of both, stakeholders agreed that a combination of both may be necessary. It was acknowledged that charging for good mooring facilities and services may prove to be difficult for boat dwellers on low incomes. This is particularly the case where land owners may need to invest to provide additional facilities on moorings. It was suggested that the return on capital investment and revenue costs prevent investment in new moorings at present. As such, there may be a need for affordable moorings which could be managed by a housing association.

Health and education

- 2.12 There were few comments in relation to whether local boat dwellers experience specific health or education issues. Some stakeholders commented on how some boat dwellers have mental health and substance misuse issues. They commented on how some boat dwellers have 'fallen through the net' and live on boats because they cannot cope living in a house. Some commented on how many boat dwellers have minimal access to facilities and healthcare. This is because they tend to move around with no fixed address and there is no support infrastructure.
- 2.13 The NBTA stated that they issue guidance on accessing health and registering with a GP; accessing mainstream education; accessing social services support; and accessing welfare benefits. They cited an example of Bath and North-East Somerset Council which works closely with the charity 'Julian House'. The charity signposts boat dwellers to support organisations and agencies and could be used as a model for local authorities and third sector agencies.
- 2.14 Absence of secure and permanent moorings were regarded by both stakeholders and boat dwellers as limiting boat dwellers' access to services. Not having a postal address adversely impacts on access to employment, registering with GP, education and training, and access to benefits. Some boat dwellers are able to resolve the issue by having post sent to family or friends, or local pubs, whilst other boat dwellers may be registered as living in a house elsewhere (often in a different authority area).

Summary

- 2.15 Consultations with stakeholders and boat dwellers offered important insights into the main issues regarding boat dwellers residing on the waterways. There was general agreement that there is a need for more permanent residential moorings but also a need for more flexibility on existing provision, in relation to short term use and potential use of non-permanent residential moorings all year round.

3. Boat dwellers

Introduction

- 3.1 As described in Chapter 1, this assessment considers the accommodation needs of boat dwellers. Unlike Gypsies and Travellers, boat dwellers are not considered to be an ethnic minority and, as such, are not protected by the Equality Act 2010. Nonetheless, government guidance (DCLG 2016) indicates that local authorities should consider the accommodation needs of boat dweller families. Given the presence of boat dwellers in the study area they have been included in this report.

Methodology

- 3.2 Given that the requirement to determine the accommodation needs of boat dwellers was only recently introduced by the DCLG Draft Guidance on Housing Needs (Caravans and Houseboats) (March 2016), there is no established method to determine need. As such, the need for residential moorings in the study area is assessed according to DCLG (2007) guidance and supplemented by data provided by the local authorities and consultation with stakeholders (in particular the boat dwellers). It is also in accordance with NBTA guidance. This methodology has previously been used by *RRR Consultancy* to undertake Boat Dweller Accommodation Assessments (BDAAs) on behalf of Oxford City Council (2018) and Wokingham Borough Council (2019), and for other authorities as part of their GTAAs including the Broads Authority (as part of the Norfolk 2017 ANA).
- 3.3 Whilst there has been consultation with households living on boats in the area, it has not been possible to consult with enough to base the assessment on the consultation alone. This assessment is based on consultation with boat dwellers, boat yard and marina owners and managers, National Bargee Travellers Association (NBTA), Residential Boat Owners Association (RBOA), local authority data, assessment of secondary data, online data concerning marinas, yards and the waterways in the area.
- 3.4 The consultation has led to the following: estimated number of authorised and unauthorised, residential and transit moorings; the number of occupied and vacant moorings; the characteristics of the boat dwellers; and the need for residential and transit moorings.

Existing Supply

- 3.5 Table 3.1 below lists the number of authorised moorings, and unauthorised developments (UD) (moorings), and those with temporary planning permission per local authority within the study area. There is planning permission for 23 permanent residential moorings.

Table 3.1 Current supply	
Location	Moorings
Boat Yard 1	10
Boat Yard 2	12
Boat Yard 3	1
Total	23

Source: BDAA 2022

- 3.6 However, 8 of the 10 moorings at Boat Yard 1 are currently unoccupied but will potentially be made available in due course. Also, the 12 moorings at Boat Yard 2 are yet to be developed, so are considered ‘potential’ moorings. This results in 3 occupied authorised moorings, and 20 potential moorings.

Calculation of Accommodation Need

- 3.7 The need for residential moorings in the study area is based on the model suggested in DCLG (2007)⁶ guidance and supplemented by data provided by the local authorities. Whilst this guidance relates specifically to assessing needs for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, it is considered appropriate for assessing needs for residential moorings and has been found sound in our similar assessments (including Broads Authority 2017, Oxford City Council 2018, and Islington 2019).

Requirement for residential moorings 2021-2026

- 3.8 It is estimated that there are about 140 boat dwellers who reside on boats all year around. Key locations for boat dwellers include Thorpe Island area and Beccles. There are also those who are categorised as constant cruisers and some who have moored in discreet locations across the study area. Some boat dwellers reside at marinas on an ad hoc basis. Due to mooring licences, they might stay at the mooring for the agreed limited period of time, but then travel the waterways or moor elsewhere for the remainder of the year. It is estimated that less than half of such boat dweller households have need of a residential mooring. Due to choice or financial restraints the remaining boat dwellers prefer to be constant cruisers. They require more flexible transit provision.
- 3.9 As Table 3.2 illustrates, the above results in an estimated requirement for a further 45 residential moorings in the study area for the period 2021 to 2026.

⁶ Although the guidance was withdrawn in December 2016 it remains useful as a model for determining accommodation need.

Table 3.2 Estimate of the need for residential moorings 2021-2026

1) Current occupied residential	3
<i>Current residential supply</i>	
2) Vacant but available for use	0
3) Expected to become vacant	0
4) Planned to be built or brought back into use	20
Total Additional Supply	20
<i>Current residential need</i>	
5) Seeking residential permission from temporary permission	0
6) Households requiring residential moorings	65
7) Family growth	0
Total Additional Need	65
<i>Balance of Need and Supply</i>	
Total Additional Requirement	45

Source: BDAA 2022

Requirement for permanent residential moorings 2021-2026: steps of the calculation

3.10 Information from local authorities and consultation with stakeholders and boat dwellers was used to inform the calculations. The remainder of this chapter describes both the process and results of the boat dwellers needs calculations.

Supply of moorings 2021-2026

Step 1: Current occupied permanent residential moorings

3.11 Based on information provided by the Broads Authority and corroborated by information from the consultation. There are currently 3 occupied authorised residential mooring.

Step 2: Number of unused permanent residential moorings available

3.12 As the mooring is occupied there are 0 unused residential moorings.

Step 3: Number of existing residential moorings expected to become vacant between 2021-2026

3.13 This is calculated using mortality rates as applied in conventional Housing Needs Assessments. It then calculates the number of residential moorings that would become vacant as a result of the mortality. This results in 0 additional supply.

Step 4: Permanent moorings planned to be built or brought back into use, 2021-2026

3.14 This can include moorings which have been partly developed, never developed or which were previously occupied but are now vacant and in need of redevelopment. This results in 20 additional supply.

Need for Moorings 2021-2026

Step 5: Seeking permanent permission from temporary residential moorings in the study area 2021-2026

3.15 This is determined by local authority data. It is assumed families residing on moorings whose planning permission expires within the period 2021-2026 will still require accommodation

within the study area. There are currently 0 residential moorings with temporary planning permission located in the area.

Step 6: Households seeking permanent residential mooring in the study area 2021-2026

This is determined by the data gleaned from the consultation and secondary data. It is estimated that there are 65 households seeking permanent provision across the study area.

Step 7: Family growth in the study area 2021-2026

3.16 This is based on household growth. A growth rate of 0.6% per annum (equating to 3% over a 5-year period) is applied. This results on 0 additional need in the first five years.

Balance of Need and Supply

3.17 From the above the net additional plot requirement is calculated by deducting the supply from the need.

Requirements for residential moorings 2026-2041

3.18 It is assumed that by 2026 vacant residential moorings will be occupied, potential moorings will have been developed and occupied, and any additional need will have been met by new supply. The base figures regarding the number of residential moorings at the end of the first 5-year period would be 68 (3 existing occupied mooring + 20 potential + additional need of 45).

3.19 If any of the 20 potential moorings are not available to be occupied by 2026, then the accommodation needs will increase by a subsequent number e.g., if 8 of the 20 potential moorings not available, then the additional need will increase by 8 resulting in an additional accommodation need of 53 permanent residential moorings.

3.20 Based on consultation with boat dwellers and stakeholders, whilst there is limited evidence of the level of intergenerational need, there is evidence of ongoing demand by new generations of the settled community in need for residential moorings across the study area. Therefore, this assessment has incorporated assessment of the needs for 2026 – 2041. This is based on the method adopted for the other communities (household growth minus mortality).

3.21 The boat dweller accommodation needs for the period 2026-2041 are determined by applying a mortality rate of 0.4% per annum (equating to 2% over a 5-year period), and a population growth rate of 0.6% per annum (equating to 3% over a 5-year period). This equates to a net population growth of 1% during each 5-year period.

3.22 The residential moorings accommodation needs for the period 2021-2041 are shown in Table 3.3 below:

Table 3.3: Summary of boat dweller accommodation needs 2021-41 (moorings)					
	2021-26	2026-31	2031-36	2036-41	2021-41
Broads Authority	45	1	1	1	48

Source: BDAA 2022

Requirements for transit moorings: 2021-2041

3.23 The Broads Authority manages a number of transit short-stay stopping places across the study area for boaters. There are 974 24-hour moorings at 57 locations across the Broads Authority area. Most are free for boat owners to use. There are many more boat moorings available moorings at places, although some charge a fee.

3.24 It is recommended that current short-stay moorings are upgraded. This includes ensuring easy access to the bank and clear and secure facilities to secure the boats, electric and water hook-ups, toilet and household waste facilities, access to parking within walking distance, and ensuring that the emergency services can access moorings.

Summary

3.25 Table 3.4 summarises the number of permanent residential moorings, required over the period 2021-41. It shows that a further 48 permanent residential moorings are needed between 2021 and 2041 in the Broads Authority planning area.

Table 3.4 Permanent residential moorings need 2021-2041	
	No.
2021-2026	45
2026-2031	1
2031-2036	1
2036-2041	1
Total	48

Source: BDAA 2022

4. Conclusions on the evidence

Introduction

- 4.1 This final chapter draws conclusions from the evidence. It then makes a series of recommendations relating to meeting the identified need for moorings, site management and facilities, and recording and monitoring processes. The recommendations throughout this chapter are put forward by *RRR Consultancy* for the authority to consider in accordance with respective policies and constraints.
- 4.2 The chapter begins by presenting an overview of the policy changes, followed by a review of the accommodation needs and facilitating these needs for boat dwellers. It then concludes with key recommendations.

Policy Changes

- 4.3 In March 2016 the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published its draft guidance to local housing authorities on the periodical review of housing needs for caravans and houseboats. It states that when considering the need for caravans and houseboats local authorities will need to include the needs of a variety of residents in differing circumstances including, for example caravan and houseboat dwelling households and households residing in bricks and mortar dwelling households.
- 4.4 The Housing and Planning Act 2016 requires Local Housing Authorities (LHAs) to consider the needs of people residing on places on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored. Section 124 (4) of the Act defines a “houseboat” as a boat or similar structure designed or adapted for use as a place to live. However, the accommodation needs determined by this assessment uses a broader definition first used by the Broads Authority⁷ who define boat dwelling as vessels capable of navigation and is used as the main residence but may occasionally go cruising and return to base.
- 4.5 Importantly, according to correspondence between *RRR Consultancy Ltd* and DCLG (27 October 2016), the DCLG stated that it is for local housing authorities to assess and understand the accommodation needs of people who reside in or resort to the area with respect to the provision of caravan sites or houseboats. This means that there is no “standard” methodology that can be followed i.e. it is for each authority to prepare (and justify) an appropriate methodology.

⁷ The definition was developed as part of *the Norfolk Caravans and Houseboats Accommodation Needs Assessment* (ANA) undertaken by *RRR Consultancy Ltd* in 2017.

New accommodation provision

- 4.6 Due to the transient characteristic of boat dwellers it is not possible to identify with certainty all existing households residing on boats in the study area. However, the assessment has provided an estimation of need and identified the general circumstances of boat dwellers requiring permanent residential moorings. The accommodation need in the Broads Authority planning area derives mainly from boat dwellers residing on unauthorised ('unregulated') moorings, tolerated unauthorised moorings, and constant cruisers who require accommodation in the local area.
- 4.7 Table 4.1 summarises the number of permanent residential moorings, required over the period 2021-41. It shows that a further 48 permanent residential moorings are needed over the local plan period.

Table 4.1 Permanent residential moorings need	
	No.
2021-2026	45
2026-2031	1
2031-2036	1
2036-2041	1
Total	48

Broads Authority BDAA 2022

Temporary stopping provision

- 4.8 It is recommended that the current short-stay moorings are made available for longer periods out of season. It is also recommended that these provisions are upgraded. This includes ensuring easy access to the bank and clear and secure facilities to secure the boats, electric and water hook-ups, toilet and household waste facilities, access to parking within walking distance, and ensuring that the emergency services can access moorings.

Summary

- 4.9 As well as incorporating the identified need into its local plan, it is recommended that the authority incorporate consideration of any planning applications that might materialise over the plan period from households whose existence was not known at the time of the assessment. This could include households residing on unauthorised moorings, due to immigration, and those residing in bricks and mortar accommodation. This accommodation need should be considered separate to the need identified above and could be met through windfall applications.
- 4.10 Finally, this report primarily recommends that the Broads Authority works jointly with other relevant service providers where appropriate to address boat dwellers' accommodation needs. The other recommendations are as follows:

New mooring places and sites

- Contact the marina owners and managers in the Broads Authority area to discuss the possibility of some leisure berths being granted planning permission for permanent residential moorings.
- Develop criteria and processes for determining the suitability of boat dwellers' residential moorings for including in emerging/future Local Plans.
- Agencies could consider helping to meet the needs of households unable to afford to own a mooring or the rental costs of existing moorings by renting or leasing small parcels of local authority owned land to them and assisting with planning applications and mooring development.
- To consider alternative funding mechanisms such as: acquisition funds; loans for private mooring provision through Community Development Financial Institutions; and joint ventures with members of the boating community.
- To determine whether some of the accommodation needs of boat dwellers can be met by affordable or supported housing.

Mooring services and facilities

- Ensure all mooring areas have access to facilities such as toilet and household waste disposal provisions. If possible, all authorised moorings (residential and visitors' moorings) should have access to electric and water hook-up points, and for residential moorings to have individual access and a secure post-box.
- To work with other agencies, in order to review the enforcement processes that are in operation.

Communication and cooperation

- Formalise communication processes between relevant housing, planning and enforcement officers etc. in both the study area and neighbouring local authorities.
- For agencies to develop a holistic vision for their work on boat dwelling services and facilities, and to embed it in Community and Homelessness Strategies, Local Plans and planning and reporting obligations under the Equality Act 2010.
- Provide training and workshop sessions with service provider employees (and elected members) to help them to further understand the key issues facing the boat dwellers.
- The population size and demographics of the boating community groups can change rapidly. As such, their accommodation needs should be reviewed every 5 to 7 years.

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Glossary

Bargee traveller: people whose main or only home is a boat without year-round access to a permanent mooring.

Boat Dweller Accommodation Assessment (BDAA): a document which assesses the accommodation needs of boat dwellers.

Canal & River Trust (CRT): replaced British Waterways in July 2012. It is a registered charity whose main aim is to protect over 2,000 miles of waterways in England and Wales.

Constant cruiser: a boat dweller whose permanent residence is a boat but has no permanent mooring i.e. they constantly cruise. They may temporarily use transit moorings but such stays are usually limited to between 24 hours and 14 days.

DCLG Draft Guidance on Housing Needs (Caravans and Houseboats) (March 2016): provides advice on how to consider the needs of people residing in caravans or houseboats where they differ from those of the settled community.

Environment Agency: an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs. It is responsible for the management of the River Thames and other river channels that join their main courses.

Houseboat: defined by Section 124 (4) of the Housing and Planning Act (2016) as a boat or similar structure designed or adapted for use as a place to live.

Housing and Planning Act 2016: requires Local Housing Authorities (LHAs) to consider the needs of people residing on places on inland waterways where houseboats can be moored.

Leisure cruiser: someone who cruises the waterways for recreational purposes and does not permanently reside on a boat.

Mooring: a place beside a canal or river used to moor boats. Some moorings have facilities such as electricity hook-up points or space for storage. They can be used for temporary (transit) mooring or permanent mooring. 'Authorised' moorings have planning permission whereas 'unauthorised' do not.

Transit mooring: a mooring used for a short period of time – usually between 24 hours and 14 days. Transit moorings are managed by a range of private and public organisations including the Environment Agency (EA) and Canal and River Trust (CRT).