



Broads Local Access Forum Annual Report 2019-20

June 2020

Broads Authority
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Broads Local Access Forum

Statutory Purpose

The Broads Local Access Forum is an independent advisory body established by the Broads Authority in 2003, under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

The Act states that the purpose of the Forum is to be a statutory advisory body to provide guidance and advice to the Broads Authority and other organisations on the improvement of public access within the Broads and to contribute to opportunities for open air recreation and the enjoyment of the area. In providing advice, the Forum will have regard to:

- The needs of land management
- The conservation of the natural beauty of the area
- The management and maintenance of recreational access whilst balancing this against the needs of nature conservation, agriculture, the interests of landowners and managers, navigation and countryside management projects within the Broads

The Forum's Vision

The Broads is an unrivalled wetland of natural diversity, heritage and special character. It is a place where people come to explore, enjoy and find spiritual refreshment. Access to the Broads should be clear and easy to use, respectful of wildlife and land management, meet users' needs and promote responsible and harmonious behaviour. The Broads Local Access Forum will champion access improvements and management, represent a wide range of interests and contribute to sustainability for the environment, communities and the economy.

What has happened during the year?

The Forum at Work

The Forum has delivered its purpose in a number of ways:

- I. The Forum held three public meetings, one of which was held virtually, to agree its advice to the Broads Authority and other organisations.
- II. The Forum provided representation and or guidance to the Norfolk LAF and at the Regional LAF meetings.
- III. The Forum has provided suggestions and advice on a number of projects being delivered.
- IV. Members attended a trip to Aston Rowant National Land Access Centre to learn about access for all paths, British standards on gaps, gates and stiles and how to ensure projects are compliant in future.

- V. Members are expected to continue to network and gather relevant information and opinions from wider groups to feed back into the Forum.

Challenges faced by the Forum.

In September the Forum was introduced to the newly appointed Waterways and Recreation officer who had a steep learning curve to get up to speed with the role. The main challenge however was the continued pressure on public funding for countryside access across all local authorities. This has been further strained with the impact of Covid 19. The full fall out from this has yet to be seen.

Advising the Broads Authority and other bodies

The Forum has given advice to a number of bodies over the year:

- Norfolk County council, general PROW improvements and recommendations.
- River Wensum Strategy Group and the delivery plan.

The Forum has also advised the Broads Authority on:

- The Integrated access strategy prioritisation plan
- A number of individual projects for access improvements.

Broads Local Access Forum Constitution

The Forum rewrote and adopted a new constitution which is in line with the Countryside and Rights of way act 2000 and the local access forum regulations 2007. The Forum also decided to take a more 'hands on approach' with agenda setting and project ideas in future, aiming to work together to drive access improvements through to completion.

Access Reports and presentations

The Forum received the following access reports and presentations:

- Norfolk FWAG presentation on local access agreements
- Suffolk Wildlife trust – Carlton marshes project
- Aston Rowant National Land Access Centre – Lessons learnt
- Update on publicly accessible slipways and launching points
- Integrated access strategy project update
- GIS data recording project
- Project updates from Norfolk County Council

Working in Partnership

The Forum has worked with the following partner organisations:

- Norfolk County Council
- Suffolk County Council
- Norwich City Council
- River Wensum Strategy Group
- Norfolk FWAG
- Norfolk LAF
- Suffolk LAF
- Environment Agency
- Broadland District Council

Observers and advisors to the Forum

- Mike Auger, Norfolk County Council
- Matt Hayward, Norfolk County Council
- Ken Hawkins, Norfolk Local Access Forum
- Martin Sullivan, Norfolk Local Access Forum
- Marie-Pierre Tighe, Broads Authority
- Dan Hoare, Broads Authority
- Lewis Treloar, Broads Authority

Who makes up the Broads Local Access Forum?

Chair and Vice-chair

In December 2019 the Forum re-appointed Keith Bacon as Chair and Mike Flett as vice-chair of the Broads Local Access Forum.

Members and representation

Chairman: Keith Bacon – Catfield

Tel: 01692 581314 keithbacon@keme.co.uk

Representing archaeology and landscape heritage

Vice-Chairman: Mike Flett – Ludham

Tel: 01692 678560 mikeandjeanne@btinternet.com

Representing Local Authority (Parish Councils)

Kelvin Allen - Downham Market

Tel: 01366 384458 kelvinallen@btinternet.com

Representing Broads Authority

Linda Aspland – Wroxham

Tel: 01603 951814 linda.aspland@icloud.com

Representing waterborne recreational users/paddle sports

Louis Baugh – Neatishead

Tel: 07785 224589 lbaugh@netcom.co.uk

Representing landowners and managers

Harry Blathwayt – Ludham

Tel: 01692 678644 Harry.blathwayt@north-norfolk.gov.uk

Representing Local Authority (District council) Tourism and local business

Julie Brociek-Coulton – Norwich

Tel: 07786694325 jewills064@aol.com

Representing Broads Authority (Up until 20 June 2020)

Liz Brooks – Ludham

Tel: 01692 678674 ejb553@gmail.com

Representing equestrian riding and driving

Robin Buxton – Lingwood

Tel: 01493 750102 robin.buxton@ukgateway.net

Representing landowners and managers, tourism and local businesses

Tony Gibbons – Norwich

Tel: 01603 400973 tonygibbons.ndaa@gmail.com

Representing angling

Tim Harris – Catfield

Tel: 01692 580220 tim@catfieldhall.com

Representing Nature conservation/Archaeology and landscape heritage

Dawn Hatton – Norwich

Tel: 01603 433174 stock.dawn@gmail.com

Representing walking, people with disabilities and access for all

Peter Mason - Catfield

Tel: 01692 583152 peter.mason51@sky.com

Representing walking, tourism and local business

John Murray – Lowestoft

Tel: 07855385041 john.campbell.murray@btinternet.com

Representing Walking/people with disabilities/access for all

Stephen Read – Oulton Broad

Tel: 07720 808715 stevereadcon@btinternet.com

Representing walking and waterborne recreational users

Richard Webb – Norwich

Tel: 01603 505362 dickwebb@talktalk.net

Representing walking and sailing

Christopher Yardley – Burnham Thorpe

Tel: 01328 738705 cj.yardley@tiscali.co.uk

Representing waterborne recreational users and nature conservation