Navigation Committee

Agenda 05 November 2026

10.00am

King's Centre, 63-75 King Street, Norwich, NR1 1PH

Sarah Cowley, Chief Executive – Thursday, 29 October 2026

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations (2014), filming, photographing and making an audio recording of public meetings is permitted. These activities however, must not disrupt the meeting. Further details can be found on the Filming, photography and recording of public meetings page.

Introduction

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To receive declarations of interest (see Appendix 1 to the Agenda for guidance on your participation having declared an interest in the relevant agenda item)
3. To note whether any items have been proposed as matters of urgent business
4. **To receive and confirm the minutes of the Navigation Committee meeting held on 3 September 2026** (Pages 4-12)
5. **Summary of actions and outstanding issues following discussion at previous meetings** (Pages 13-14)

Reports

6. **Ranger update** (Pages 15-22)
   Report by Head of Ranger Services
7. **Operations work programme progress update** (Pages 23-28)
   Report by Head of Operations and Ecology & Design Manager
8. **Waterways compliance report** (Pages 29-38)
   Report by Waterways & Recreation Officer and Waterways Project Officer
9. **Proposed navigation charges for 2027/28 in the navigation area and adjacent waters** (Pages 39-51)
   Report by Director of Resources, Collector of Tolls and Head of Operations

Other matters

10. Other items of business
    Items of business which the chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to section 100B (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972

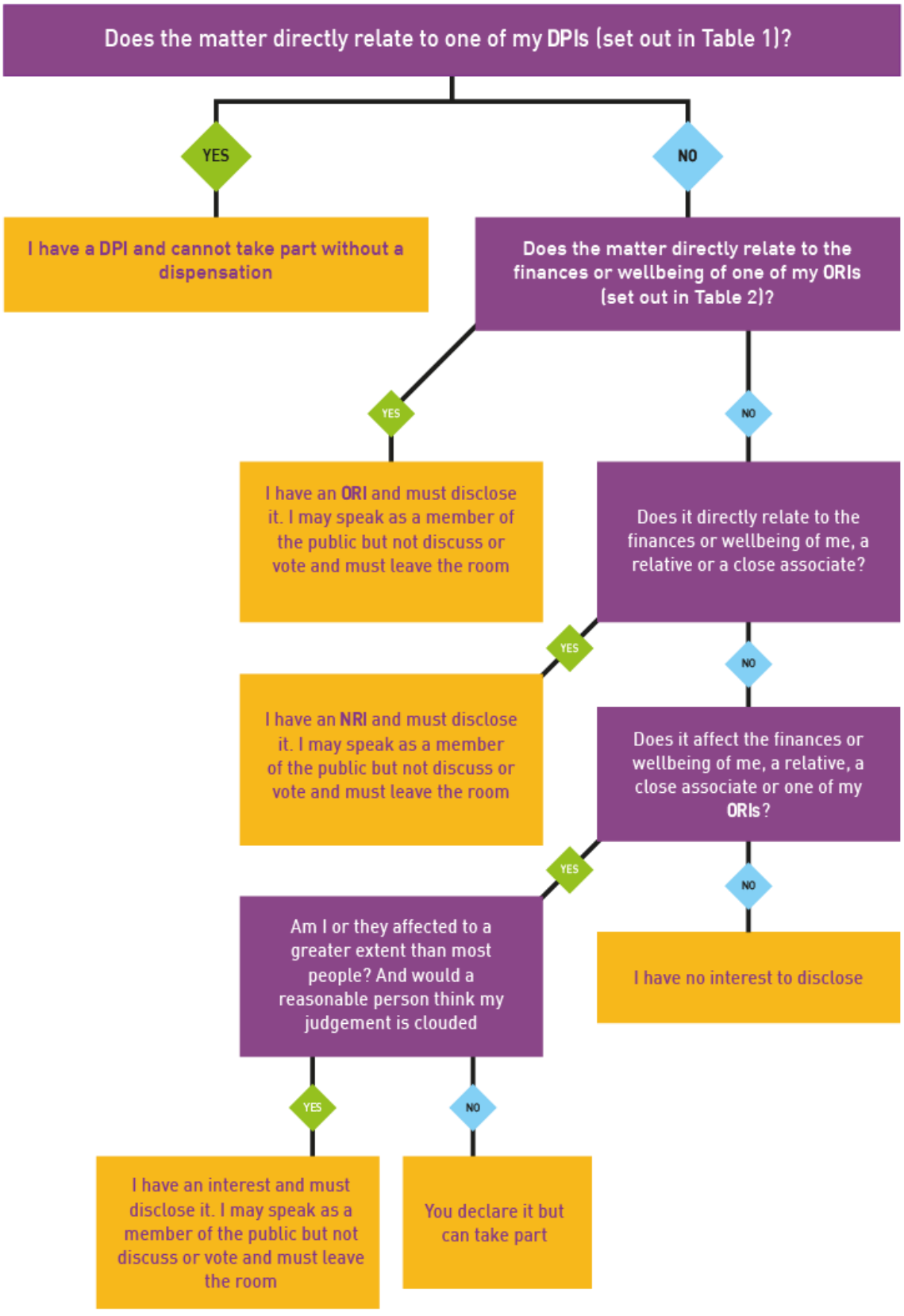
11. **To note the date of the next meeting – Thursday 21 January 2027 at 10.00am at Yare House, 62-64 Thorpe Road, Norwich NR1 1RY**

12. Exclusion of the public
    The Authority is asked to consider exclusion of the public from the meeting under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 for the consideration of the item below on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Paragraphs 1, 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act as amended, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public benefit in disclosing the information.

13. **Replacement of Wroxham Billet** (Pages 52-57)
    Report by Director of Delivery

For further information about this meeting please contact the Governance team

Appendix 1 – Extract from the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct



Navigation Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 03 September 2026

1. Apologies and welcome 2

Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 2

Chair's Announcements 2

2. Declarations of interest 2

3. Matters of urgent business 2

4. Minutes of last meeting 2

5. Summary of actions and outstanding issues following discussions at previous meetings 3

6. Chief Executive's report and current issues 3

7. Annual Income and Expenditure 2025/2026 4

8. Navigation income and expenditure 1 April to 31 July 2026 actual and 2026/27 forecast outturn 4

9. Operations work programme progress update 5

10. Oil Spill Contingency Plan 7

11. Reedham Swing Bridge 7

12. Other items of business 8

13. Date of next meeting 8

Appendix 1 – Declaration of interests: Navigation Committee, 03 September 2026 9

DRAFT

Please note these are draft minutes and will not be confirmed until the next meeting.

Present

Alan Goodchild – in the Chair, Harry Blathwayt, Stephen Bolt, Sue Cadamy, Mark Collins, Peter Dixon, Heather Hilburn, Leslie Mogford, Bob Neate, Remus Sawyerr, Paul Thomas, and Daniel Thwaites.

In attendance

Sarah Cowley - Chief Executive, Dan Hoare – Head of Operations, Emma Krelle – Director of Resources, Rob Rogers - Director of Delivery, Joseph Balaam – Governance Officer, Lorraine Taylor – Head of Governance.

1. Apologies and welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The Chair welcomed the new Chief Executive to her first Navigation Committee. Due to this, reports that were typically presented by the Chief Executive would instead be presented by the Head of Governance.

Apologies were received from Tony Grayling

Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

The Chair explained that the meeting was being audio-recorded. All recordings remained the copyright of the Broads Authority and anyone wishing to receive a copy should contact the Governance Team. The minutes remained the formal record of the meeting. He added that the law permitted any person to film, record, photograph or use social media in order to report on the proceedings of public meetings of the Authority. This did not extend to live verbal commentary. The Chair needed to be informed if anyone intended to photograph, record or film so that any person under the age of 18 or members of the public not wishing to be filmed or photographed could be accommodated.

Chair's Announcements

The Chair informed the committee that Colin Sanderson had sadly passed away last week. The Chair extended condolences to Colins' family and friends, on behalf of the Members and Officers of the Authority.

2. Declarations of interest

Members expressed their declarations of interest as set out in Appendix 1 of these minutes.

3. Matters of urgent business

No items were proposed as a matter of urgent business.

4. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2026 were signed by the Chair as a correct record of the meeting.

5. Summary of actions and outstanding issues following discussions at previous meetings

Members received a report summarising the progress of issues that had recently been presented to the Committee. The Head of Governance (HoG) asked Members if they were willing to amalgamate the three bridge related items. A Member expressed concern that combining the reports could create a lack of precision. The Director of Delivery emphasised that the report was a summary of the action the Authority had taken and the Communications team provided updates to navigators advising of any changes and restrictions. Consequently, the Members agreed to combine the three bridge related items.

A Member asked if there were any navigation related funding items included in the National Park Funding Update report to the Broads Authority in July. The Director of Resources said additional revenue funding from DEFRA would enable the Authority to upgrade some of the Authority's computer systems and purchase land and equipment. The Authority had recruited the services of a Capital Project Manager to assist with the development process of the numerous proposed capital expenses.

A Member asked if the funding the waterways item on the summary remained necessary. The HoG said the item was originally added to make a case to DEFRA to use allocated funds for waterways maintenance. This goal had been achieved and Members were happy for the item to be closed.

A Member requested the addition of an item relating to the Broads Plan. The HoG said updates were provided at Broads Authority meetings and papers were available to all co-opted Members. The Navigation Committee summary of actions report only referenced items brought to the Navigation Committee. At present the Broads Plan was at the evidence gathering stage and would be brought to the Navigation Committee at a later stage in the process.

6. Chief Executive's report and current issues

Members received the report of the Chief Executive (CE). The Head of Governance (HoG) thanked the Head of Ranger Services and the Head of IT/Collector of Tolls for producing the statistics provided in the report.

A Member asked for an update on a sunken vessel located near St. Benet's. The Director of Delivery (DoD) said the process was ongoing, but the vessel had been made safe and a notice issued.

A Member thanked the tolls team for their work on prosecutions but believed the ratio of verbal warnings to prosecution may be too low. The Member had witnessed multiple instances of reckless behaviour on the Broads, particularly in relation to speeding, which they believed were becoming more common. Due to this the Member believed it may be necessary to prosecute more cases. The DoD acknowledged that the verbal warning figures were high but commented that this was not unusual. The Broads Authority would prosecute the worst

cases but a verbal warning from Rangers was usually sufficient for first offences. The Member showed concern for the financial burden placed on the Authority in relation to sunken vessels. The Member had previously supported an increase to tolls in order to fund the increasing cost of removing and destroying these vessels. The DoD said this was a national issue that was not specific to the Broads. The DoD added that the Authority was ahead of the field in dealing with such vessels and had been contacted by the Environment Agency and the Canal and River Trust for advice regarding the management of sunken vessels.

A Member was sympathetic to the issues faced by the Authority in relation to sunken vessels but expected the issue would not improve unless legislative changes were made. The Member added they believed increasing prosecutions in relation to speeding would be a mistake and favoured the current approach used by the Authority.

A Member asked if persistent speeding would result in prosecution. The DoD confirmed this was the case.

7. Annual Income and Expenditure 2025/2026

Members received the report of the Director of Resources (DoR). The DoR said the report provided a summary of accounts from the previous financial year against the budget. The DoR said the audit was ongoing but believed the process would be completed in time to allow the accounts to be approved at the November Broads Authority meeting.

A Member asked if the Authority had given thought to the reduction of large cruisers. The Member said that they had received a report which showed that numbers of large cruisers had declined by 436 since 2019 which represented a reduction in tolls income of approximately £283,000 annually. The DoR replied that she had not seen this report and would therefore not be able to comment further. The report was not produced by the Broads Authority, and it was unclear on what evidence the report was based. The DoR emphasised that both private and hire boat tolls between, 1 April to end of August 2026, were above the profiled expectations.

8. Navigation income and expenditure 1 April to 31 July 2026 actual and 2026/27 forecast outturn

Members received the report of the Director of Resources (DoR). The DoR provided an update on tolls up to the end of August; hire boat tolls were £24,258.78 above the predicted value and private toll income was also £32,536.25 higher than forecasted. The DoR said the annual pay increase had been agreed at 3.3%. This increase had been included in the current budget and would be processed in the October payroll.

A Member asked if the pay rise was always negotiated annually. The DoR said this was the case in recent years.

A Member asked if the Authority had examined the changes in larger vessel numbers as they believed the Broads were losing large boats due to infrastructure issues. The DoR said

variations to tolls were reported at the November meeting each year. A Member commented the Authority monitored this closely and confirmed the figures had been made available to members of the Navigation Committee in an annual report.

9. Operations work programme progress update

Members received the report of the Head of Operations (HO) and the Ecology and Design Manager. The HO thanked the Ecology and Design Manager for their efforts in co-authoring the report.

The HO outlined the upcoming dredging schedule in section 1 of the report. Narrow areas of the River Chet and several locations on the River Yare would feature in the programme. The HO said appendix 1 and 2 provided figures on dredging and staff time for the current year. These statistics were seasonally effected, with activities such as water plant cutting, taking place at specific times during the year. Appendix 3 and 4 detailed the final summary of figures from the previous year.

The HO provided an update on a new mooring the Authority would install. Funds from DEFRA had been allocated to install a pontoon mooring at Castle Marsh, Worlingham. Installation of the pontoon was expected in October; however, this date was subject to the completion of land transfers.

The HO highlighted section 4 of the report and commented the electric charging pillars would be the same as used by the Canal and River Trust. The HO said this system was more efficient and allowed boaters to pay for the exact amount of electricity used and retain any unused credit for future transactions. A series of FAQs would be posted to the Authority website in preparation for the November installation of the electric pillars and the HO advised boaters not to stock up on the old cards.

A Member suggested the Authority provide guidance on when boatyards should stop selling the old cards, which would not be compatible with the new system. The Member asked if retailers would be reimbursed by the Authority for any unsold cards. The HO confirmed that retailers would be reimbursed. The Member asked if a lack of phone reception could impact use of the pillars. The HO said the connection was between the boaters phone and pillar which had its own signal. A lack of GSM signal would not be an issue as long as the user had credit on their Meter-Macs account.

A Member asked if the dredging schedule for the upcoming year would enable the Authority to complete items outstanding on the previous years schedule that had been delayed due to salinity levels. The HO said the current programme does not expand dredging activity, but that the postponed areas will be prioritised in subsequent schedules to ensure they are addressed.

A Member asked what costs were associated with dredging schedule items that could not be completed. The HO said that permits from the Environment Agency, sediment sampling, staff time, and various landowner work agreements were all items of expense that were required prior to carrying out any dredging. These were all part of the project preparation, which could be up to eighteen months in some cases.

A Member asked if future dredging would be impacted by salinity levels, which were likely to worsen. The HO said the Ecologists were monitoring salinity, and discussions had taken place with the Environment Agency regarding safe salinity threshold levels to protect fish whilst dredging works were being carried out. The Member commented Himalayan Balsam was out of control on the River Chet and asked whether this would impact dredging. The HO did not anticipate dredging to be affected. A Member asked if the claim relating to Himalayan Balsam had been substantiated. The HO said the Authority did not closely monitor the presence of Himalayan Balsam on private land. The HO acknowledged that whilst some landowners actively managed Himalayan Balsam, it was not the policy of the Authority to do so on the specific stretch of waterway. The HO reiterated the presence of Himalayan Balsam in the area would not impact the Authority's dredging schedule.

A Member expressed concern regarding section 3.3 and 3.4 of the report. The Member commented that the closure at Paddy's Lane deprived boaters of valuable mooring space which could be further exacerbated by potential future closures of 24-hour moorings should structural issues be found. The Member was concerned that work at Paddy's Lane would not begin before 2027/28 and asked if there was an approach to be taken which would allow the Authority to anticipate future mooring maintenance needs. The HO said the issue at Paddy's Lane was sudden and due to soft peat in the area. This made the structure vulnerable, an issue that was discovered by Rangers during safety checks. The closure at Paddy's Lane was a partial one which had reduced the number of moorings available rather than remove them entirely. The HO said the provided timescale presented the earliest possible opportunity due to the long process of conception to delivery of the project.

A Member agreed with the importance of mooring availability and requested an update on the Potter Heigham staithe project. The Member commented that the committee had acknowledged the importance of the Staithe at a previous meeting and wondered how the design was progressing. The HO said stakeholder and members of the community had been consulted for their views on the project, and the selected option of a central pontoon provided wider access to vessels and would adapt to changes in water levels. The project was at the design stage and the HO assured Members that the pontoon would be strong and stable when finished. To achieve this, ground investigations were underway and the Authority was working with a design contractor to integrate the pontoon with the new piling, to make the structure as sturdy as possible. The Member asked if planning permission would be required. Having consulted the Planning Team on the matter, the HO said that the statutory process was not required.

A Member asked whether credit on a boaters Meter-Macs account could be used to pay for other associated mooring costs. The HO said the credit was not multi-functional and could only be used for electricity.

A Member had noted that the growth of water plants at Hickling appeared to have slowed. The Member asked if this was related to the Authorities dredging activities. The HO said that water plant surveys had confirmed that cutting was not required and expected this may be due to high salinity levels over the winter and not due to any dredging activities. The Member

asked if any additional silt removal had been undertaken following the experimental use of the Cutter Suction Dredger in the River Bure at Great Yarmouth. The HO said the cutter suction pump had worked well in areas where sediment was soft but was not suitable in some locations where heavy debris would create challenges.

10. Oil Spill Contingency Plan

Members received the report of the Head of Ranger Services (HRS). The Director of Delivery (DoD) said the plan was out for consultation as part of the plans five-year review.

A Member asked what the maximum volume of oil spill the Authority could manage, should it need to do so. The DoD said the Authority did possess booms and mats to handle oil spills and retained a national contractor for any larger spills that could not be managed internally. The DoD believed there was a low risk of large oil spills originating on the Broads.

11. Reedham Swing Bridge

Members received the report of the Director of Delivery (DoD). The DoD said Reedham Swing Bridge was now operational, two weeks ahead of schedule. The DoD thanked Network Rail for undertaking the sizeable construction work and added the speed in which the work had been completed was commendable.

A Member asked if the Authority had the right to request regular testing of swing and lift bridges to assess their performance and determine whether any maintenance was necessary. The DoD said a number of different organisations were responsible for the bridges across the Broads. Due to this the bridges level of maintenance, opening schedules and challenges all differed. Swing bridges in Reedham and Somerleyton were complex in their construction which made it hard to visually examine potential faults.

A Member asked what lesson the Authority had learned from the experience with Reedham Swing Bridge. The DoD said he was now involved with the Emergency Weather Action Team for Network Rail. This provided the Authority with a forum to raise issues relating to Network Rail assets.

A Member asked if there were any updates regarding proposed bridges at the Coleman site. The DoD said the position of the East Norwich Development Board was that any proposed bridge over the navigation would need to have the ability to open to allow larger vessels passage. The cost associated with this appeared to reduce the developers desire to install bridges at the site and there were no further updates as a result.

A Member commented Reedham Swing Bridge had faced multiple closures and asked if all the issues relating to these closures had been addressed. The DoD said the issue of thermal expansion had not yet been addressed. Spraying the tracks with water had previously been trialled but this caused the bridge to rust. Sensors and monitors were in place at the bridge to monitor tract temperature. The DoD intended to raise this as a separate issue with Network Rail via the Emergency Weather Action Team. A Member commented that thermal issues were inevitable with moving bridges.

A Member said they had witnessed some individuals engage in unacceptable radio communications with bridge operators. The Member commented that operators performed to the best of their abilities.

12. Other items of business

There were no other items of business.

13. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Navigation Committee would be held on Thursday 5 November 2026 at the King's Centre, 63-75 King Street, Norwich, NR1 1PH commencing at 10am.

The meeting ended at 11:12am

Signed

Chairman

DRAFT

Appendix 1 – Declaration of interests: Navigation Committee, 03 September 2026

Member	Agenda/minute	Nature of interest
Alan Goodchild, Harry Blathwayt, Stephen Bolt, Sue Cadamy, Mark Collins, Peter Dixon, Leslie Mogford, Bob Neate, Remus Sawyerr, Paul Thomas and Daniel Thwaites	11	No interests to declare but advised that they had received an email from the Broom Owners Club regarding item 11 on the agenda

DRAFT

Navigation Committee

05 November 2026
Agenda item number 5

Summary of actions and outstanding issues following discussions at previous meetings

Title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Summary of actions	Progress so far	Target date
Boat Safety Scheme Compliance	04/09/2025	Bill Housden	Amend the Authority's Byelaws, to require a current Boat Safety Certificate to be held in respect of vessels, other than seagoing freight vessels, as a condition of using the navigation area and adjacent waters for the purposes of safety.	**October 2025:** Solicitors instructed to proceed with drafting byelaw. **January 2026:** Awaiting draft byelaw from solicitors. **March 2026:** Solitiors have provided advice on next steps, officers to meet and discuss. **August 2026:** Section 11 of the Broads Authority Act 2009 sets out what can be included in byelaws for registration of vessels. Upon registration an owner can be required to submit with his application evidence of compliance with the standards applicable to the vessel. Furthermore, where the Authority is satisfied that a vessel does not comply with the standards it can cancel the registration of that vessel. There is no power to include in the registration byelaws an offence of not holding a valid boat safety certificate, the only permissible action is to cancel the registration. **October 2026:** No updates to report	
Haven Bridge; Carrow Road Bridge; and Reedham, Somerleyton and Oulton Swing Bridges - updates	03/09/2026	Rob Rogers	To report on any works, repairs or issues regarding Haven Bridge; Carrow Road Bridge; and Reedham, Somerleyton and Oulton Swing Bridges.	**September 2026:** At its meeting on 3 September, the Navigation Committee agreed to amalgamate the three Bridge items into one progress update. All historical updates can be found in previous versions of the Summary of Actions and Outstanding Issues available via the committee papers on the Broads Authority website. A report on Reedham Swing Bridge was presented to the Navigation Committee on 3 September 2026. **September 2026:** Reedham Swing Bridge was now operational as of 3 September 2026, two weeks ahead of schedule. At the Navigation Committee, the DoD thanked Network Rail for undertaking the sizeable construction work and added the speed in which the work had been completed was commendable. On 25 September 2026, it was reported that Reedham Swing Bridge was currently not operating due to an electrical fault.	

Title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Summary of actions	Progress so far	Target date
				October 2026: The issue reported on 25 September was a temporary issue related to the settling in of the new bearing and sensors. Reedham Bridge was operational on 26 September, and this remains the case to date.	

Date of report: 21 October 2026

Navigation Committee

05 November 2026
Agenda item number 6

Ranger update

Report by Head of Ranger Services

Purpose

To provide a briefing on significant matters relating to the maintenance and management of the waterways.

Broads Plan context

4.1 Maintain existing navigation water space and develop appropriate opportunities to expand or extend access for various types of craft

4.3 Implement, promote and monitor measures to maintain and improve safety and security for the navigation and boats

Contents

1. Navigation patrolling and performance targets 1
2. Sunken and abandoned vessel update 2
3. Super Safety Days 2
4. Aids to Navigation Annual Inspection 2

Appendix 1 – Rangers exercise of powers analysis 3

Appendix 2 – Ranger duties: total time allocated and actual days 5

Appendix 3 – Sunken and abandoned vessels current position as at 20 October 2026 7

1. Navigation patrolling and performance targets

1.1. The report of the significant use of powers by the rangers is displayed in Appendix 1 and reflects the busy summer season. Verbal warning for speeding remains the highest use of the Ranger powers. The average navigation/countryside splits since April are set out in Appendix 2. The figures are higher on the navigation side as would be expected

at the end of the summer when patrolling is a priority. The planned countryside tasks over the winter will ensure the targets are met.

2. Sunken and abandoned vessel update

2.1. The sunken and abandoned vessels are detailed in Appendix 3. Since the last report, 9 new Notices have been issued, 3 vessels have been registered, 11 vessels have been recovered and a further 2 are being progressed. One notable vessel over this period was the sunken vessel at St Benets which, at the end of the 28-day notice period, was successfully raised by the Ranger and Construction teams using the dredging rig equipment.

3. Super Safety Days

3.1. This year the Rangers held 10 Super Safety Days (SSDs) across the Broads at popular locations including Salhouse, How Hill, Beccles and Reedham. Over 550 vessels, including hire craft, private boats, canoe and paddle boards were seen over the course of the 10 events, with Rangers giving advice on safety matters from use of lifejackets, boat safety scheme requirements and safe speed. Rangers also provided information on local wildlife and how to reduce impacts on the area through responsible boating. At the SSDs we were joined by partner organisations including NSBA, Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, RNLI and Broads Beat which helped to strengthen the safety messages. Our thanks to those organisations for their support for these events.

4. Aids to Navigation Annual Inspection

4.1. As part of their duties, Rangers are required to carry out ongoing conditions checks and maintenance on the channel markers which form part of the Aids to Navigations which are inspected annually by Trinity House. The condition of the Aids to Navigation, including those belonging to other organisations, such as lights on the swing bridges and cable crossing signs, form part of the control measures for navigation risks within the Formal Safety Assessments. Other than an issue with the light sequencing on the swing bridges belonging to Network Rail, which has since been rectified, the annual inspection found the Aids to Navigation to be in good condition.

Author: Lucy Burchnall

Date of report: 20 October 2026

Broads Plan strategic actions: 4.1, 4.3

Appendix 1 – Rangers exercise of powers analysis

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

Appendix 3 – Sunken and abandoned vessels current position as atat 20 October 202620/10/2026

Appendix 1 – Rangers exercise of powers analysis

Table 1

Verbal warnings	**Wroxham launch** Wroxham and upper Bure	**Irstead launch** Ant	**Ludham launch** Hickling, Potter Heigham, upper Thurne	**Ludham launch 2** lower Thurne and lower Bure	**Norwich launch** Norwich and upper Yare	**Hardley Launch** Reedham, Chet and middle Yare	**Burgh St Peter launch** Oulton Broad and upper/ middle Waveney	**Breydon launch** Breydon water, lower Waveney and Yare
Care and caution	15	8	16	32	18	17	18	1
Speed	1089	499	56	407	121	80	58	29
Other	66	58	7	5	89	51	17	229

Table 2

Written warnings	**Wroxham launch**	**Irstead launch**	**Ludham launch**	**Ludham launch 2**	**Norwich launch**	**Hardley Launch**	**Burgh St Peter launch**	**Breydon launch**
Care and caution		2			1	4		1
Speed	1	2		2	3		4	
Other	24	56	3	5	3	34	34	29
Special directions				22	52			48

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	184	144	122	137	138	105	103	184
Volunteer patrols		7					4	
IRIS reports	7	6	1	8	8	4	2	2

Table 4

Broads Control total calls

Contact method	Number of calls
Telephone	13,993
VHF	1170
Total	**15,163**

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

Table 1

Broads Authority corporate duties

Work area	Annual allocation (days)	Actual days to date
Training	112	53.45
Broads Control	401	213.89
Team meetings, work planning	243	152.64
Partnership working	61	1.96
Assisting other sections	74	27.23
Billets and boatsheds	35	8.92
Launch – general		1.96
Trailers - general		.27
Vehicle maintenance		4.66
Other equipment repair		3.38
Total	**926**	**468.34**

Table 2

Navigation duties

Work area	Annual allocation (days)	Actual days to date
Patrolling	1660	1375.95
Escorts	37	13.92
Prosecution files	0	7.16
Bankside tree management	80	10.34
Obstruction removal	42	26.22
Raising & Removing Wrecks	0	19.73
Channel markers and buoys	25	9.32
Signs and boards maintenance	43	14.26
Adjacent waters	86	56.01
Reactive mooring maintenance	100	26.15
Total	**2073**	**1559.05**

Table 3

Conservation, recreation, countryside maintenance

Work area	Annual allocation (days)	Actual days to date
Fen management	168	10.74
Lake, riverbank restoration	99	2.57
Invasive species control	42	1.01
Other conservation work	168	7.03
Pollution response		9.05
Visitor site maintenance	188	110.95
Public Engagement	110	49.46
Public footpath work	69	4.32
Education work	38	12.84
Total	**882**	**207.97**

Team total up to 19 October 2026

Percentage Navigation: 88%

Percentage National Park: 12%

Appendix 3 – Sunken and abandoned vessels current position as at 20 October 2026

Description	Location found	Action	Notice affixed	Result
Motor Cruiser	Old River Yare, Thorpe	Vessel sunk at owners' moorings	No	Not affecting the navigation
Motor Vessel	River Ant, Sutton Broad	Believed Abandoned	Yes	Vessel now compliant
Kayak	Lower Bure, Great Yarmouth	Believed Abandoned	Yes	Vessel recovered
Dinghy	Chet	Believed Abandoned	Yes	Vessel recovered
Motor Vessel	Womack Water	Unserviceable vessel	Yes	Vessel sunk at St Benets. Sunken Vessel Notice used and vessel recovered.
Dinghy	River Yare, Thorpe St Andrew	Believed Abandoned	Yes	Vessel recovered
Aux Yacht	River Bure, Yarmouth	Found drifting, believed abandoned	Yes	Vessel recovered
Motor Vessel	River Waveney, Beccles	Believed abandoned	Yes	Vessel registered
Motor Vessel	River Wensum, Norwich	Believed abandoned	Yes	Vessel recovered
Motor Vessel	River Yare, Langley	Believed abandoned	Yes	Vessel recovered
Aux Yacht	River Yare, Langley	Believed abandoned	Yes	Vessel recovered
Aux Yacht	River Ant, Horning Marshes	Believed abandoned	Yes	Vessel recovered
Aux Yacht	River Chet	Believed abandoned	Yes	Vessel recovered

Description	Location found	Action	Notice affixed	Result
Motor Vessel	River Waveney, Somerleyton	Believed abandoned	Yes	Awaiting end of Notice period
Motor Vessel	River Chet	Believed abandoned	Yes	Vessel registered
Motor Vessel	River Wensum, Norwich	Unserviceable Vessel	Yes	Awaiting end of Notice period

Navigation Committee

05 November 2026
Agenda item number 7

Operations work programme progress update

Report by Head of Operations and Ecology & Design Manager

Purpose

To provide the Committee with an update on the Authority's management activities to maintain public navigation, develop mooring facilities for public use and demonstrate the effective use of available resources in managing the Broads waterways.

Broads Plan context

C1: Maintain navigation water depths to defined specifications, reduce sediment input, and dispose of dredged material in sustainable and beneficial ways.
C2: Maintain existing navigation water space and develop appropriate opportunities to extend access for various types of craft.
C3: Manage water plants, riverside trees and scrub, and seek resources to increase operational targets.
C4: Maintain and improve safety and security standards and user behaviour on the waterways.

Contents

1. Achieving Waterways Specifications 2
2. Water plant management 2
3. Maintaining safe public mooring facilities 3
4. Riverside Tree Management 4
5. Electric charging at moorings 4

Appendix 1 – Annual dredging progress 2026/27 (to end September 2026) 5

Appendix 2 – Operational staff time spent on all work types 2026/27 (update to end September 2026) 6

1. Achieving Waterways Specifications

1.1. The detailed breakdown in Appendix 1 gives the figures and volumes for the current dredging programme for 2026/27 (April 2026 to the end of September 2026). A total of 12,350 m³ of dredged sediment has been removed from the prioritised sites. This figure represents 49% of the programmed target of 25,210 m³ for the year.

1.2. Dredging along Martham Dyke has started in October. All this sediment will be spread on the adjacent banks. In early November, targeting dredging of sediment accumulations between Candle Dyke and West Somerton, will be undertaken using floating plant. This sediment will be taken round to Chara Bay in Hickling Broad, as capacity exists in that area habitat creation area. Small individual shoals will also be removed at the entrance to Meadow Dyke and the entrance to Catfield Dyke. Sediment dredged from the Somerton Dyke stretch will be side cast onto the floodbank behind the footpath.

1.3. On the River Yare, from November onwards, shoals will be dredged in the Brundall area, either end of Haddiscoe New Cut and at the confluence of the Yare and Waveney, with sediment being taken to a floodbank set back area at Cantley. On the River Chet downstream of Hardley Flood to the River Yare, the largest shoals and areas of encroaching reed will be dredged in the window available in late February and March, before the Easter holidays and the start of the 2027 hire season. Plans to dredge the narrow sections adjacent to Hardley Flood, working with the Environment Agency to top up floodbanks with dredged material, have been deferred to November 2027 to allow appropriate ecological mitigation and site preparation.

1.4. The Notices to Mariners are here Notices to Mariners and will have the most up to date information on navigation restrictions.

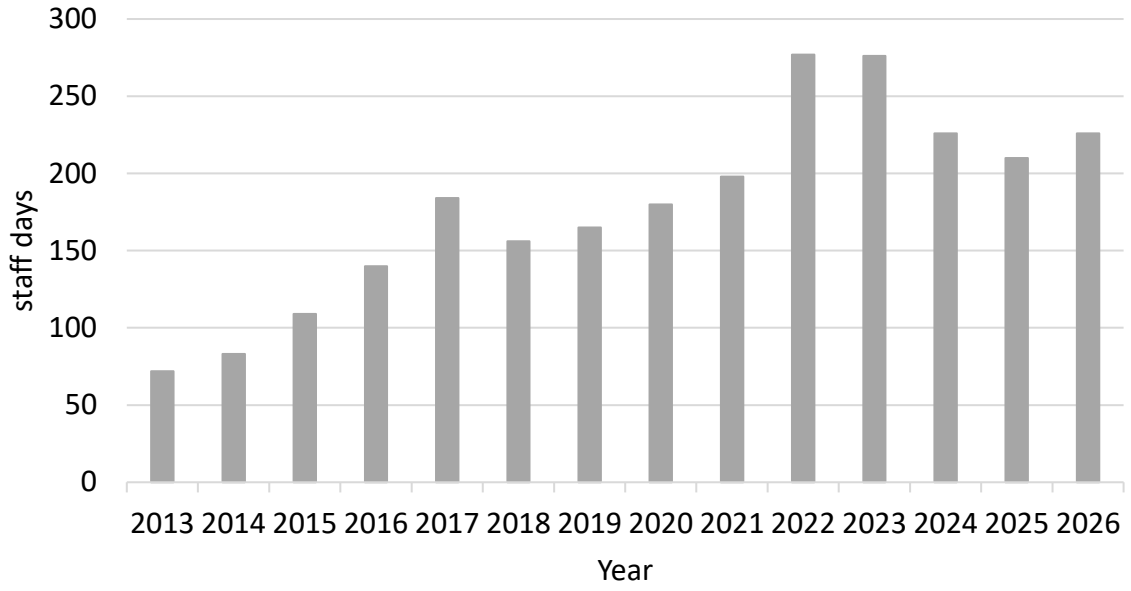
2. Water plant management

2.1. During the 2026 season, water plant cutting was carried out in the marked channels of the Upper Thurne (excluding Hickling Broad); the River Bure upstream of Wroxham; the Waveney between Beccles and Geldeston, the River Ant around Wayford Bridge and Dilham; Thorpe River Green and in the channels of Rockland and Bargate Broad on the River Yare; and the River Wensum upstream of Trowse.

2.2. Water plant growth in Hickling Broad in 2026 failed to reach the growth thresholds that required any direct management to maintain navigable access in the marked channel.

2.3. The annual trend in the total number of days the water plant harvesters are operated to maintain navigable access is shown in Figure 1. Over the past five years, total effort has exceeded 200 workdays per year, reflecting increased volume and the spread of plant growth across all Broadland rivers.

2.4. Figure 1. Total number of water plant harvesting days per year



3. Maintaining safe public mooring facilities

3.1. At Acle Bridge, the improvement plans across the whole site, including the river frontage, the thatched building, and the toilet block are progressing as one integrated project. Because the thatched building's footprint overlaps with where anchoring piles will be required for the riverfront piling, the timelines for each work element are interlinked. Planning consent has been applied for the redevelopment of the thatched building, including the demolition and the collection of asbestos-containing sheds. Landscaping and path levels around the toilet block will be improved, creating better access across the whole site. Riverfront re-piling and extension to the 24-hour mooring are planned for September 2027, with construction of the new thatched building following.

3.2. At Commissioner's Cut 24-hour mooring at Thorpe St Andrew on the River Yare, the condition of the sheet piling is at the end of its useful life, with some significant structural failures starting to occur. Given the restricted width of the Cut, fully re-piling both sides does not provide value for money for the length of mooring retained. Alternate options include:-

- remove the site as a 24 mooring;
- replace piling on one side; (downstream side)
- widen the Cut and install a pontoon mooring along the length of the Cut; and
- pile across the Cut, infill the area with dredged sediment and install a pontoon mooring in line with the river edge.

Each option needs further feasibility work over the next six months to determine costs, mooring capacity, meeting Integrated Access Strategy objectives (distance between moorings, access to land-based facilities etc.), planning consent requirements, flood risk assessment and ecological considerations.

4. Riverside Tree Management

4.1. The areas for management over this winter (2026/27, Year 5) have been drawn from the five-year plan (2022/23 to 2026/27). Please see the webpage Riverside tree and scrub management, which includes the maps showing riverside tree management areas for Year 5 (2026/27). Key areas for this winter are on the Yare near Bramerton (to be completed using the tree shears); Waveney (just upstream of Beccles); and on the Ant (along Tyler's Cut).

5. Electric charging at moorings

5.1. A series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) have now been published on the Authority's webpage, which gives details of what the replacement of the pedestals will entail, and how users will be able to activate supply at the point of use. See Upgrade to Broads Authority electric charging points

5.2. Installation is due to start by the end of November, with a full programme of installation dates to be confirmed once the installation contractor is confirmed. The aim is to minimise the downtime of electrical supply at individual moorings.

Author: Dan Hoare & Sue Stephenson

Date of report: 22 October 2026

Broads Plan strategic objectives: C1, C2, C3, C4

Appendix 1 – Annual dredging progress 2026/27 (to end September)

Appendix 2 - Operational staff time spent on all work types 2026/27 (to end September 2026)

Appendix 1 – Annual dredging progress 2026/27 (to end September 2026)

Project title **Dredge site and sediment re-use location**	**Active Broads Authority dredging weeks completed/ planned**	**Planned volume removed m^3**	**Actual volume removed m^3**	**Planned annual project cost[1]**	**Actual project cost**
River Yare Trowse Eye to Brundall	17/19	9,000	11,400	£127,480	£130,030
Postwick Tip – April to August					
River Bure Upton Dyke	3/2	770	950	£18,360	£28,520
Oby Setback – April to May					
River Yare & Chet Lower Yare Chet (shallows)	0/11 0/5	7,000 4,000	0 0	£134,720	£8,940
Cantley Setback – November to March					
River Thurne Martham & Somerton Boat Dykes Somerton to Candle Dyke	0/2 0/12	1,300 3,140	0 0	£158,450	£3,700
Martham & Somerton Boat Dykes (sidecast) – October to November *Somerton to Candle Dyke (Chara Bay re-use site, Hickling Broad) – November to February*					
River Bure Mid-Bure	-	-	-	£3,270	£9,100
Lagoon preparation costs					
Site restoration	-	-	-	-	£42,880
Future site preparation Survey, mitigation & set-up	-	-	-	-	£4,430
Dredging support activities	-	-	-	-	£20,620
Total	**20/51**	**25,210**	**12,350**	**£442,280**	**£248,220**

Appendix 2 – Operational staff time spent on all work types 2026/27 (update to end September 2026)

Work type	Planned - Days	Planned - % of annual total days	Actual - Days	Actual - % completed
Navigation (56%)	**2850**	**56**	**1518**	**30**
Italics are proportion within Navigation				
Dredging	**1335**	**47**	**603**	**21**
Mooring maintenance & repairs	**630**	**22**	**224**	**8**
Riverside tree management	**50**	**2**	**0**	**0**
Water plant cutting	**240**	**8**	**215**	**7**
Other navigation works[1]	**176**	**6**	**69**	**2**
Corporate allocation [2]	**419**	**15**	**407**	**14**
Recreation (9%) [3]	**446**	**9**	**277**	**5**
Conservation (35%) [4]	**1796**	**35**	**820**	**16**
Total	**5092**	**100**	**2615**	**51**

1 – includes raising & disposal of wrecks, channel markers & buoys, gauge boards & signage

2 – includes premises & equipment maintenance, training, sickness & gaps in recruitment.

3 - National Park-funded work to facilitate public access and visitor services.

4 – National Park-funded work to carry out priority fen management and other biodiversity restoration projects

Navigation Committee

05 November 2026
Agenda item number 8

Waterways compliance report

Report by Waterways & Recreation Officer and Waterways Project Officer

Purpose

This report provides the Committee with information on the level of compliance with the Waterways Specifications defined in the Waterways Management Strategy, based on the most recent analysis of hydrographic survey data available.

Broads Plan context

This report relates to the Broads Authority's aim to manage sediment in the Navigation Area, as described in the Broads Plan objective:-

C1 - Maintain navigation water depths to defined specifications, reduce sediment input and dispose of dredged material in sustainable and beneficial ways

Contents

1. Introduction 1
2. Waterway Specification compliance summary 2
3. Methodology 3
4. Latest results 3
5. Future priorities 4
6. Risk implications 4

Appendix 1 - Updated sediment compliance and prioritisation table 6

1. Introduction

1.1. The Authority adopted the Waterways Management Strategy (WMS) in 2021. A critical outcome of the WMS is to direct the Authority's dredging operations to achieve the Waterway Specification for individual Management Units within the navigation area. This means that the Authority is focusing its dredging efforts so that waterways users in

the Broads have enough water depth most of the time, except during very rare low tides. Where compliance falls short of the targets, then action can be identified and planned into the future dredging programme.

1.2. Management Units are used in the Waterways Management Strategy to split the rivers, broads and dykes into identifiable management sections based on similar overall environment, channel form and waterways usage.

1.3. Sonar hydroacoustic technology allows for very high-resolution data of the entire bed area of the management units to be compared with the desired profile. This allows for an accurate assessment and mapping of non-compliant areas and quantifying the amount of sediment to be removed to achieve compliance.

1.4. The spatial and numerical data analysis allows the identification of non-compliant areas and where these can be economically dredged. High-resolution mapping also identifies sediment accumulation very accurately, thus driving efficiency when it comes to targeting sediment removal.

1.5. As reported within the September 2024 Navigation Committee report on waterways compliance, the plan to resurvey all Management Units on a rolling five-year hydrographic programme to ensure up-to-date data is available is on track. Since that last report, locations surveyed in January 2025 and January 2026 include all the Management Units in the River Yare and Management Units in the River Bure and Chet respectively.

1.6. In the same surveying window, areas were surveyed after dredging to allow assessment of the results. In 2025 and 2026, these areas included from Horstead through to Hoveton Viaduct and Rockland & Bargate Broad respectively.

2. Waterway Specification compliance summary

2.1. The ‘boat usage score’ is derived from ranger input to inform the level of usage by boats within Management Units. Previously, mobile phone location data highlighted general trends of river usage but required a high level of sense checking due to anomalies caused by data drift, particularly in data collection areas (100 m^2) that incorporated footpaths and roads adjacent to the river. Given the amount of expert judgement needed to correct for weaknesses in the method, the activity index has reverted to the previously used 'boat usage score' generated through the ranger teams year-round experience and knowledge of the river stretches.

2.2. Rangers have allocated 'boat usage’ scores by four levels across the Broads network; the levels are 'very high', 'high', 'medium' and 'low'. Boat usage scoring includes unpowered craft (sailing, paddlecraft, rowing dinghies etc) and motorised craft. This reflects the relative number of craft actively using the Management Units.

2.3. 'Very high' usage is found on the River Bure in Management Units: Salhouse Broad, Hoveton Viaduct Bridge to Salhouse and Salhouse Broad to Horning Church, which reflects the number of private moorings, hire boat yards and general popularity of the area. 'Low' areas of boat usage include Units such as: Tyler's Cut, Meadow Dyke, Horsey Mere and dykes primarily used for mooring, e.g. Acle Dyke, Hardley Dyke etc.

3. Methodology

3.1. Once all the data sources have been collated for each Management Unit (see Table 1 below for the list of criteria), the Management Units are ranked based on the final column "Priority Score". This approach enables multiple factors to be used in the prioritisation of locations where dredging is most required, will have the biggest impact and will be cost effective to deploy Authority resources. The updated sediment compliance and prioritisation table is included in Appendix 1.

Table 1. Description of the criteria to evaluate Waterways Compliance.

Management Unit	Sediment Volume (m^3)	Non-Compliant area (%)	Proportion of economically dredgable sediment (%)	Boat usage score / Boat usage category	Priority Score
Definable waterbody area (river stretch or broad) where hydrographic data has been captured	Volume of sediment in cubic metres needed to be dredged to achieve the Waterways Specification	Percentage of the surface area of the Management Unit that has some accumulated sediment above the Waterways Specification	Percentage of the Sediment Volume which is in a layer greater than 30 cm (i.e deep mud)	4 = very high 3 = high 2 = medium 1 = low Scores reflect number of vessels (unpowered/ paddle craft and motor vessels) using the waterways	Score calculated by multiplying the values in the previous three columns and dividing by 100.

4. Latest results

4.1. The Management Unit Horstead to Coltishall Common was recently dredged in 2024, however the most recent sediment volume shows there is still 5,946 m^3 of sediment within this unit. The reason behind the moderate volume of sediment persisting in this Unit, is due to various locations of gravel bed and an old cattle crossing. Natural gravel

beds are ecologically sensitive which meant we could not dredge to full depth, or in some cases at all to avoid disturbance to the overall river hydromorphology and fish spawning sites. Prior to the refresh of the Waterways Management Strategy and Action Plan in April 2027, there is potential for a review of dredge specification depth, so that a target is not being chased that is a) not a priority for most users, and b) presents an unacceptable ecological risk.

4.2. In 2024 we reported that Bishops Bridge to Postwick had a non-compliant volume of 20,975 m^3. In the 2026 data, this is now showing as 5,039 m^3. This stretch had a two-year dredging campaign between Trowse Bridge and Postwick to target the main shoals, resulting in improved compliance.

5. Future priorities

5.1. Whilst the priority ranking of Management Units is derived from a range of information and data, shaping an effective dredging programme also relies upon operational practicalities, gaining various ecological and waste permits, and third-party landowner agreements. The priority river stretches to be dredged in the next two years include Hoveton Viaduct Bridge to Salhouse, and through to Horning Church. The lower Bure is also a priority to dredge, which will take place when a suitable re-use site has been secured in the Bure Loop area. A large stretch of the River Ant, between Barton Broad to Ludham Bridge is high on the list to be included on the programme in upcoming years.

5.2. Hoveton Viaduct Bridge to Salhouse ranks higher in the prioritisation table than Salhouse Broad to Horning Church. However, because a suitable sediment re-use location has been identified, extending the dredging downstream to Salhouse Broad to Horning Church would be operationally efficient and cost-effective while the team and equipment are already working in the area.

6. Risk implications

6.1. To support the Authority's compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code through its Safety Management System, this report assesses compliance with the Waterways Specifications and identifies the priority order for dredging projects. Maintaining the specified waterway depths helps to reduce risks to river users. The Authority manages these risks through a continuous programme of hydrographic data collection, compliance assessment and targeted dredging.

Author: Emily Leonard & Tobi Radcliffe

Date of report: 20 October 2026

Background papers: Waterways and Compliance Report – September 2024
Waterways Management Strategy

Broads Plan strategic objectives: C1 - Maintain navigation water depths to defined specifications, reduce sediment input and dispose of dredged material in sustainable and beneficial ways

Appendix 1 – Updated sediment compliance and prioritisation table

Appendix 1 - Updated sediment compliance and prioritisation table

River	Management unit	Sediment volume (m3)	Non-compliant area (%)	Proportion of economically dredgable sediment (%)	Boat usage score (4 - 0)	Boat usage category	Score
Bure	Cockshoot Dyke	424.25	98.77	0.95	3	High	281.97
Bure	Salhouse Broad	17229.75	89.45	0.75	4	Very High	268.53
Waveney	Haddiscoe Cut	30095.47	63.78	0.88	3	High	169.11
Waveney	Geldeston Dyke	2279.69	89.2	0.94	2	Medium	168.19
Bure	Hoveton Viaduct Bridge to Salhouse	18687.58	45.27	0.77	4	Very High	139.66
Bure	Coltishall Common to Juby's Farm	14322.19	60.45	0.73	3	High	132.13
Yare	Thorpe River Green	5151.98	59.88	0.72	3	High	129.97
Bure	South Walsham Broad	9449.71	81.25	0.46	3	High	111.31
Ant	Barton Broad to Ludham Bridge	19519.62	68	0.53	3	High	109.07
Thurne	Martham Dyke	663	100	1	1	Low	100
Ant	Stalham Dyke	5789.91	47.57	0.68	3	High	96.52
Yare	Rockland Broad (outside channel)	110425.23	96.58	1	1	Low	96.12

River	Management unit	Sediment volume (m3)	Non-compliant area (%)	Proportion of economically dredgable sediment (%)	Boat usage score (4 - 0)	Boat usage category	Score
Yare	Bargate (outside channel)	16178.71	94.62	0.99	1	Low	93.45
Ant	Lime Kiln Dyke	1225.18	49.2	0.59	3	High	86.84
Bure	Salhouse Broad to Horning Church	15050.09	28.41	0.73	4	Very High	82.99
Bure	Acle Dyke	3663.48	83.72	0.98	1	Low	82.42
Bure	Horstead to Coltishall Common	5946.2	87.12	0.93	1	Low	81.12
Yare	Rockland Broad (marked channel)	10442.49	51.03	0.79	2	Medium	81.1
Waveney	Oulton Broad	28186.16	59.51	0.45	3	High	79.46
Bure	Malthouse Broad	6179.11	65.24	0.4	3	High	78.84
Ant	Sutton Dyke	8662.88	64.93	0.57	2	Medium	73.66
Thurne	Catfield Dyke	3733.1	82.22	0.89	1	Low	72.92
Bure	Marina Quays to Bure Mouth	9056.73	28.35	0.81	3	High	69.26
Bure	Fleet Dyke	3978.09	50.37	0.45	3	High	67.27
Thurne	Hickling Broad (marked channel)	15955.08	67.23	0.5	2	Medium	66.57
Thurne	Martham Ferry to West Somerton Drainage Mill	5565.87	48.99	0.65	2	Medium	63.64
Ant	Ludham Bridge to Ant Mouth	2261.37	45.57	0.46	3	High	63.09
Yare	Hardley Dyke	1781.8	69.41	0.86	1	Low	59.42

River	Management unit	Sediment volume (m3)	Non-compliant area (%)	Proportion of economically dredgable sediment (%)	Boat usage score (4 - 0)	Boat usage category	Score
Yare	Bishops Bridge to Postwick	5039.07	22.09	0.85	3	High	56.27
Yare	New Mills to Bishops Bridge	3147.82	23.09	0.81	3	High	56.22
Bure	Mautby Marsh Mill to Marina Quays	23451.12	21.1	0.85	3	High	53.55
Thurne	Womack Dyke	3278.7	48.86	0.54	2	Medium	53.02
Bure	Juby's Farm to Caen Meadow	6136.29	34.15	0.76	2	Medium	51.72
Thurne	Hickling Broad (outside channel)	192282.53	81.52	0.6	1	Low	48.7
Thurne	Somerton Boat Dyke	632.18	77.1	0.59	1	Low	45.16
Bure	Caen Meadow to Hoveton Viaduct Bridge	5320.21	28.26	0.78	2	Medium	43.97
Bure	Upton Dyke	723.53	30.63	0.69	2	Medium	42.47
Thurne	Heigham Sound	5965.73	57.29	0.37	2	Medium	42.02
Thurne	Thurne Dyke	344.46	70.86	0.2	3	High	41.81
Ant	Barton Broad (outside channel)	12343.67	35.24	0.39	3	High	41.61
Bure	Horning Church to Thurne Mouth	9687.85	20.66	0.64	3	High	39.7
Yare	Bargate (marked channel)	2573	51.05	0.69	1	Low	35.02
Ant	Tyler's Cut	1414.48	64.86	0.5	1	Low	32.64
Thurne	Horsey Mere	49911.91	97.44	0.33	1	Low	32.2

River	Management unit	Sediment volume (m3)	Non-compliant area (%)	Proportion of economically dredgable sediment (%)	Boat usage score (4 - 0)	Boat usage category	Score
Bure	Acle Bridge to Stokesby	6345.21	12.91	0.82	3	High	31.71
Thurne	Waxham Cut	7772.87	34.19	0.92	1	Low	31.29
Bure	Stokesby to Herringby Hall	7083.72	11.75	0.88	3	High	31.18
Ant	Barton Broad (marked channel)	13169.61	22.71	0.45	3	High	30.56
Yare	Deal Ground to Trowse Eye	670.65	34.98	0.84	1	Low	29.3
Ant	Smallburgh Canal	996.92	26.4	0.98	1	Low	25.8
Yare	Postwick to Brundall	13316.94	10.19	0.83	3	High	25.42
Ant	Wayford Bridge to Barton Broad	8778.53	15.49	0.53	3	High	24.84
Waveney	Oulton Dyke	2706.79	11.78	0.7	3	High	24.74
Yare	Langley Dyke	948.93	27.11	0.89	1	Low	24.18
Thurne	Deep/Deep Go Dyke	1319.34	13.54	0.82	2	Medium	22.29
Thurne	Meadow Dyke	1437.39	45.06	0.45	1	Low	20.35
Bure	Ranworth Dam	333.58	10.13	0.61	3	High	18.55
Waveney	Geldeston to Beccles	2741.89	9.29	0.65	3	High	18.2
Chet	Loddon to Chet Mouth	2233.72	26.36	0.62	1	Low	16.41
Waveney	Beccles to Burgh St Peter	13163.22	9.21	0.84	2	Medium	15.49

River	Management unit	Sediment volume (m3)	Non-compliant area (%)	Proportion of economically dredgable sediment (%)	Boat usage score (4 - 0)	Boat usage category	Score
Bure	Herringby Hall to Mautby Marsh Mill	3489.17	5.62	0.83	3	High	14.01
Thurne	Thurne Mouth to Martham Ferry	1298.88	10.14	0.44	3	High	13.39
Thurne	Candle Dyke	305.84	6.23	0.8	2	Medium	9.92
Waveney	St Olaves to Breydon	7813.52	4.89	0.9	2	Medium	8.81
Ant	Turkey Broad	7752.62	11.6	0.65	1	Low	7.51
Ant	Upstream of Wayford Bridge	1515.41	15.81	0.4	1	Low	6.37
Yare	Brundall to Cantley	7687.42	3.47	0.83	2	Medium	5.74
Yare	Upper Seven Mile House to Breydon	1092.65	3.35	0.78	2	Medium	5.25
Waveney	Breydon Water (marked channel)	5194.21	1.57	0.91	3	High	4.25
Waveney	Burgh St Peter to St Olaves	2146.06	2.09	0.79	2	Medium	3.29
Yare	Cantley to Reedham	654.96	0.8	0.72	3	High	1.73
Yare	Reedham to Upper Seven Mile House	58.67	0.15	0.65	2	Medium	0.2
Bure	Bridge Broad	14.56	0.19	0.94	1	Low	0.18
Bure	Thurne Mouth to Acle Bridge	3588.12	0	0.71	3	High	0

Navigation Committee

05 November 2026
Agenda item number 9

Proposed navigation charges for 2027/28 in the navigation area and adjacent waters

Report by Director of Resources, Collector of Tolls and Head of Operations

Purpose

This report is the formal consultation with the Committee on the level of charges for 2027/28 as required by S13 (3) of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988. The views of the Committee are requested. The Broads Authority will make the decision on the navigation charges for 2027/28 at its meeting on 27 November 2026.

Broads Plan context

All strategic actions under Theme C: Maintaining and enhancing the navigation.

Contents

1. Introduction 1
2. Boat numbers 2
3. Navigation Income and Expenditure 4
4. 2027/28 Proposal 5
5. Financial implications 7
6. Risk implications 7
7. Conclusion 8

Appendix 1 - Members Tolls Workshop 6 October 2026 9

Appendix 2 - Annual Boat Numbers as at 1 November 2016-2025 12

1. Introduction

1.1. Each year the Broads Authority is required to determine the level of charges for the forthcoming financial year. Annually all members are invited to a workshop to consider

the latest data available and the priorities for the next financial year. The workshop was held on 6 October 2026 and members views from the workshop have been considered and influenced the content of this report. Whilst there were varying views from the workshop the majority supported a 3.5% increase in line with inflation if the Authority could demonstrate value for money. A summary from the meeting can be found in appendix 1.

1.2. Over the last five years there have been several factors which have led to a range of increases as follows:

- 2022/23 3.6%
- 2023/24 13%
- 2024/25 8.5%
- 2025/26 5.9%
- 2026/27 3.5%

1.3. These factors ranged from covid-19 recovery, the repayment of the £250,000 loan from National Park in five yearly instalments, increased and retained staffing including the summer seasonal rangers and operation technicians, proposed health and social care levy (later abandoned by Government), high inflation in material costs, specifically aggregate, fuel, timber and steel. Increased costs of removing sunken vessels. We have also had to pay for nationally agreed pay increases for our staff as well as changes in employers National Insurance contribution rates, an increase in audit costs and the cost of prosecution for those who have not paid their tolls.

1.4. These increased costs were partially offset by changes in other charges (mooring fees), a switch in operational costs in 2025/26 from Navigation to National Park and a significant organisation restructure to reduce overall staff costs.

2. Boat numbers

2.1. The slow but steady decline in both hire and private boat numbers seen over many years is continuing. Tables 1 and 2 set these out for the last three years as at the end of September 2026.

Table 1
Hire Boats

Class	30/09/2024	30/09/2025	30/09/2026	Change 24-25	Change 25-26
Motor Cruisers	641	630	613	-11	-17
Auxiliary Yachts	43	43	44	0	1
Day Launches	344	310	308	-34	-2

Class	30/09/2024	30/09/2025	30/09/2026	Change 24-25	Change 25-26
Outboard Dinghies	1	1	1	0	0
Sailing	71	71	71	0	0
Rowing/Paddling	413	377	369	-36	-8
Houseboats	32	29	27	-3	-2
Passenger – MCA	6	6	6	0	0
Passenger - SPB	9	8	8	-1	0
Total	**1,560**	**1,475**	**1,447**	**-85**	**-28**

2.2. The fall in hired motor cruisers was not unexpected but is less than predicted by hire boat operators. A similar fall is expected in the coming year and has been accounted for.

Table 2
Private Boats

Class	30/09/2024	30/09/2025	30/09/2026	Change 24-25	Change 25-26
Motor Cruisers	4,893	4,819	4,791	-74	-28
Auxiliary Yachts	892	883	849	-9	-34
Day Launches	533	539	522	6	-17
Outboard Dinghies	919	894	870	-25	-24
Workboats	162	139	163	-23	24
Sailing	740	721	696	-19	-25
Rowing/Paddling	1,613	1,484	1,337	-129	-147
Houseboats	71	65	66	-6	1
Passenger - SPB	21	21	21	0	0
Total	**9,844**	**9,565**	**9,315**	**-279**	**-250**

2.3. Rowing and paddle craft numbers continue to fall, at the same time membership of Paddle UK, with whom we have a block licence agreement, has risen. Both sailing and motor categories reduced again this season but not as much as in the previous year. Overall private boat numbers are currently down 2.6%.

2.4. Canal & River Trust's annual National Boat Count, carried out during March 2026 across England and Wales, recorded a 2.1 per cent decrease in boat numbers across the charity's waterways.

2.5. The annual boat numbers as at 1 November for the last 10 years is set out in appendix 2.

3. Navigation Income and Expenditure

3.1. In October 2025 we were predicting income of £1,442,560 for Hire and £ 3,024,236 for Private boats. We ended the 2025/26 year ahead of those predictions for both Hire at £1,452,300 and Private at £3,046,134. Forecasts are always based on the previous year's pattern of receipt. The tolls team continue to successfully collect overdue tolls including the submission of prosecution cases.

3.2. When the level of tolls was considered for 2026/27 an allowance for a further reduction in boat numbers equating to £75,000, assumed £42,750 less for hire and £32,250 less for private income. However, income in this financial year has remained ahead of budget as set out in table 3.

Table 3
2026/27 Income

Income type	Budget	Forecast	Variance
Hire	(1,438,000)	(1,462,259)	+ 24,259
Private	(3,108,000)	(3,154,623)	+ 46,623
Short Visit and other toll income	(99,354)	(99,354)	0
Investment	(105,000)	(120,000)	+ 15,000
Total Core Income	**(4,750,354)**	**(4,836,236)**	**+ 85,882**

3.3. Expenditure currently remains on track with the latest available budget with the pay increase being agreed at 3.3% by the National Joint Council on behalf of Local Authority employers.

3.4. Tables 4 and 5 set out the projects and progress for 2026/27.

Table 4
Dredging

Location	Date	Progress
Upper Bure – spreading sediment on land	Apr-May	Complete
Yare – Thorpe to Surlingham	Apr-Aug	Complete

Location	Date	Progress
Upper Thurne	Oct-Feb	Started in October at Martham Dyke
Lower Yare shoals & Chet	Nov-Mar	Notice to Mariners issued ahead of works

Table 5
Moorings

Location	Date	Progress
Martham Bank – timber refurbishment	May - Aug	Complete
Worlingham – repairs to piling returns	May - Jun	Complete
Herringfleet – timber refurbishment	Winter 26/27	To be contracted
Potter Heigham Demasting - repiling	Winter 26/27	Design stage
Gayes Staithe – timber refurbishment	Winter 26/27	To be contracted

3.5. The three water plant harvesters were active throughout the 2026 season, with 226 workdays spent maintaining the rivers and marked channels. The routinely managed locations are described in the Operations Update Report included in this meeting.

4. 2027/28 Proposal

4.1. Several operational projects are already in the workplan for the next financial year. Mooring works include repairs to the piling at Paddy's Lane, Acle Bridge, Potter Heigham Staithe and Gayes Staithe. Other projects include to refurbish the timberwork and quay heading are planned for Coltishall Common, St Olaves, Wayford Bridge, Reedham and How Hill. Dredging projects include sections along the River Bure between Wroxham to Horning, Waxham Cut, Bure Mouth at Great Yarmouth and the River Chet. A larger project to replace gauge boards is planned. The routine water plant harvesting will take approximately 220 days of work time between May and September. 2027/28 will see the start of a new five-year riverside tree management programme. The assessment of how much length of riverbank will be managed from winter 2027/28 onwards is currently being reviewed and is due for reporting by April 2027.

4.2. An allowance for a pay increase of 3.5% has been made for 2027/28 although this is subject to negotiations by the National Joint Council which have yet to start. The trade unions are expected to put forward their claim during November 2026. The estimate

for 2026/27 was previously 3% but the final agreement was for 3.3%. 2024/25 saw a fixed amount of £1,290 per full time equivalent and 2025/26 was 3.2%.

4.3. Based on current information available a further allowance for reductions in hire boat numbers of £39,000 has been made with a nil reduction in private income. The 2026/27 year proved difficult to forecast.

4.4. Inflation has continued to rise, and the September 2026 levels are as follows:

- CPI 3.5%
- CPIH 3.6%
- RPI 3.9%

4.5. To deliver the projects above officers are recommending an increase of 3.5%in line with inflation. Tables 6 and 7 below provide the current cost and what a 3.5% increase would mean in monetary terms.

Table 6
Hire Craft Cost per m2 by category of vessel

No.	Category – cost per m^2 except rowing, canoes etc	Current	+3.5%	Increase
1.	Weekly hired motor craft	£45.59	£47.19	£1.60
2.	Weekly hired motor craft – electric and hybrid	£31.38	£32.48	£1.10
3.	Day hired – petrol/diesel	£72.45	£74.99	£2.54
4.	Day hired electric	£45.11	£46.69	£1.58
5.	MCA passenger boats and small passenger boats	£60.00	£62.10	£2.10
6.	Hired motorised sailing craft – diesel	£34.95	£36.17	£1.22
7.	Hired sailing boats & hired motorised sailing - electric	£25.55	£26.44	£0.89
8.	Hired houseboats	£23.11	£23.92	£0.81
9.	Hired rowing – fixed amount	£101.55	£105.10	£3.55
	Hired paddle craft – fixed amount	£50.77	£52.55	£1.78
10.	Private motorboats - petrol & diesel	£20.24	£20.95	£0.71
11.	Private motorboats electric	£15.47	£16.01	£0.54
12.	Private motorised sailing craft - petrol & diesel	£14.98	£15.50	£0.52
13.	Private sailing boats & private motorised sailing craft - electric	£12.37	£12.80	£0.43
14.	Private houseboats	£7.97	£8.25	£0.28

No.	Category – cost per m^2 except rowing, canoes etc	Current	+3.5%	Increase
15.	Private rowing, canoes etc. – fixed amount	£50.77	£52.55	£1.78

Table 7

Proposed increase in Private Craft navigation charges by common types and sizes of vessel

Type of Vessel	Current	+3.5%	Increase
5 m2 Private sailing craft	£61.85	£64.00	£2.15
11 m2 Private sailing craft	£136.07	£140.80	£4.73
5 m2 Private motorboats	£101.20	£104.75	£3.55
15 m2 Private motorboats	£303.60	£314.25	£10.65
22 m2 Private motorboats	£445.28	£460.90	£15.62
38 m2 Private motorboats	£769.12	£796.10	£26.98
11 m2 Day hired boats – petrol/ diesel	£796.95	£824.89	£27.94
11 m2 Day hired boats - electric	£496.21	£513.59	£17.38
38 m2 Weekly hired motor craft	£1,732.42	£1,793.22	£60.80
48 m2 Weekly hired motor craft	£2,188.32	£2,265.12	£76.80

5. Financial implications

5.1. The staff restructure in 2025/26 has meant that the Authority is limited in its ability to make further efficiency savings without effecting its capacity to deliver projects. Some short-term savings have been realised by not providing for an annual contribution to the Premises and Plant, Vessel and Equipment earmarked reserves for the duration of the capital grant funding from DEFRA. A 3.5% increase will provide a reserve balance of 11.1% at the end of 2027/28. Although this remains above the recommended minimum of 10% this will provide a cushion if boat numbers reduce further. The draft medium-term strategy currently indicates similar increases for the years up to and including 2029/30.

6. Risk implications

6.1. Risk 3 in the corporate risk register identifies loss of income as a key risk. The uncertainty in determining a further reduction in private boat numbers remains a risk but evidence in 2026/27 has shown previous predictions have not materialised. We will keep this under close review. The reserve position helps mitigate some of this risk.

7. Conclusion

7.1. Each year the Authority faces a challenge in determining the tolls for the forthcoming financial year. For the 2023/24 year that decision was delayed until the January meeting so that more up to date information was available. Aiming for an earlier decision in November each year gives hire yards certainty and the notice they need to set and advertise their prices, enabling clarity for their advance bookings.

7.2. The proposed increase is in line with inflation and that of the other Navigation Authorities. The Environment Agency use the cap of September CPI. The Canal and River Trust do not set their tolls until November, but they use a baseline of the Bank of England inflation. In addition to this they add a range of surcharges between 20-44% to their standard base fee for continuous cruisers and wide beam boats above 3.24m.

Author: Emma Krelle, Bill Housden and Dan Hoare

Date of report: 21 October 2026

Broads Plan strategic objectives: C1, C2, C3, C4.

Appendix 1 – Members Tolls Workshop 6 October 2026

Appendix 2 – Annual Boat Numbers as at 1 November 2016-2025

Appendix 1 - Members Tolls Workshop 6 October 2026

Present: Harry Blathwayt, Stephen Bolt, Sue Cadamy, Mark Collins, Alan Goodchild, Gail Harris, Heather Hilburn, Tim Jickells, Tim Munday, Bob Neate, Matthew Shardlow, and Daniel Thwaites.

Apologies: George Boyd, Morgan Brobyn, Tom Daly, Peter Dixon, Tony Grayling, Tristram Hilborn, Martyn Hooton, Siân Limpenny, Remus Sawyerr, Paul Thomas.

In attendance: Sarah Cowley, Chief Executive; Bill Housden, Head of Tolls; Dan Hoare, Head of Operations; Emma Krelle, Director of Resources; Rob Rogers, Director of Delivery; Rob Leigh, Head of Communications; Lorraine Taylor, Head of Governance (note taker).

Meeting Aims

Members received a presentation from the Director of Delivery, Head of Tolls and Head of Operations. Following the presentation, Members were invited to ask questions or comment.

Questions and Comments

- It was questioned whether the Authority had considered employing more staff to carry out the larger mooring refurbishment projects rather than bringing in a contractor? Concern was expressed it would cost more to do large mooring refurbishment due to insurance, wages, NI contributions, pension costs etc.

- The biggest drop in boat numbers is the smaller crafts, is there a question of access? Is it worth time and effort to follow up on non-payment of tolls for paddle boards/canoes? Would it be better to make tolls free for this type of craft.

Explanation was provided of Paddle UK's growing membership and the BA receiving approx. £40k from them – if we decided not to charge, the Authority would lose significant income.

- Recognition that there was a drop in outboards, that previously it had been discussed about the possibility of tolling the outboard so that could be used on several craft.

- Comment that the Authority needed to be careful about diminishing returns. The Authority had been guilty of putting tolls up to cover the loss of craft on the water, and if it were to continue this way, boating will become unaffordable. Thinks 3.5% is grossly too much. If the tolls increase by too much, people will stop paying their tolls.

- A comment was raised that there was a perception that the Authority was in good financial health; this was corrected to explain that because of temporary additional Defra funding the National Park budgets were in a better position than they were last year. The Navigation budget continues to face challenges.

- Understands the above points, and the Authority does need to constantly look at efficiency. Would argue against reducing the work that is currently being done. If facilities

decline, there is risk of declining the use of the waterways. 3.5% is reasonable if work continues, and we cannot cut the tolls at risk of losing the infrastructure.

- Understand the above comments. Commented that it is good that the current figures are not as bad as expected. Cannot see where the growth is but the Authority needs to look at the bigger picture: How can the Authority mitigate costs? We only have one side of the story on the growth element.

- Raised that it was important to look at the bigger picture.

- Looking at the predicted salary increase, did this still allow the Authority to carry out the planned work? If we agree on 3.5% increase, did this allow for projects to be delivered? What date do we take for inflation?

- Concern was raised about small boats as it affected the demographics of people using the Broads, and the loss of the younger demographic is a large concern. Asked whether the Authority was getting more short visit tolls, and whether this balanced out the reduction in small craft.

Wear and tear on the Broads is greatest from large hire boats, these boats cause more damage to the Broads – damage to moorings, speeding causes more wash and damages the banksides.

- It was raised that good arguments were put forward around why hire boats are charged more, and that toll amount is a factor around affordability of owning a boat. No evidence that it is the main driver of the reduction in boat numbers and the Authority needs to understand the reasons why.

There is an impact on H&S if tolls are reduced: if the Broads became known as unsafe for boating, then less people will visit.

Is it possible to persuade Government to help with costs of navigation?

- A question was raised on how much work proposed is attributable to sea-level rise and climate change, and whether this was in mind when projects were selected?

- It is a difficult balancing act. When speaking to toll payers, they constantly raise ‘value for money’: Moorings; number of moorings; how good the moorings are; dredging; and plant cutting. The moment toll payers see those things decreasing or deteriorating, they will not be happy. Improvements to moorings would be a top priority to increase public satisfaction.

Agree that the list of projects on the slides was a sensible list going forward. Gaining a few moorings would be a plus.

- There has been a lot of reorganisation of staff, which can only be cut so many times.

How can we communicate what the Authority does?

People need to be encouraged to the Broads.

Maintaining infrastructure and health & safety is important and this needs to be publicised.

- The funding model is set as a private good and that model is struggling as people have reduced spending capacity and materials inflation is increased. Is it possible to look at alternative funding models?

It was noted that it seems we are on a negative feedback loop.

- Looking at the financial side of the Authority, we do have a fiscal relationship that comes through the tolls. If the navigation is safe and well used, it can only benefit the Authority; a better understanding of this fiscal relationship is required.

- How do we deal with more trees coming down, increased salinity etc. in relation to the effects of climate change? The Super El Nino could put more pressure on the Authority if there are lots of storms.

- We need to investigate pots of money that will help with flooding etc.

Worrying that there are no small boat yards – need to understand this situation more.

Is there any scope to speak to action groups and have face-to-face meetings? It was raised in response that groups are angry, but this was through lack of understanding.

- In two years' time, there will be a visitor levy. How will this affect the number of visitors?

- There was some discussion on whether it would be beneficial to hold a public meeting. It was agreed that this would need to be arranged soon after the November Broads Authority meeting where the tolls were set.

Appendix 2 - Annual Boat Numbers as at 1 November 2016-2025

Table 1

Hire Boats Numbers as at 1 November

Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2024 v 2025 Change	2024 v 2025 % Change
Motor Cruisers	789	802	806	801	734	729	673	647	641	630	-11	-1.72%
Auxiliary Yachts	44	45	46	44	39	45	45	45	43	44	1	2.33%
ALL CABIN HIRE BOATS:	**833**	**847**	**852**	**845**	**773**	**774**	**718**	**692**	**684**	**674**	**-10**	**-1.46%**
Day Launches	295	290	301	297	261	326	363	359	344	310	-34	-9.88%
Outboard Dinghies	11	9	9	8	4	4	4	4	1	4	3	300.00%
Passenger Vessels MCA	6	6	6	6	5	6	6	6	6	6	0	0.00%
Passenger Vessels SPB		6	7	7	4	8	8	7	9	7	-2	-22.22%
TOTAL MOTORBOATS:	**1145**	**1158**	**1175**	**1163**	**1047**	**1118**	**1099**	**1068**	**1044**	**1001**	**-43**	**-4.12%**
Sailing Craft	102	101	95	87	74	88	73	71	71	73	2	2.82%
Rowing Craft	192	191	194	193	182	227	230	442	413	376	-37	-8.96%
Houseboats	16	28	26	26	27	27	28	27	32	27	-5	-15.63%
TOTAL HIRE BOATS:	**1455**	**1478**	**1490**	**1469**	**1330**	**1460**	**1430**	**1608**	**1560**	**1477**	**-83**	**5.32%**

Table 2

Private Boat Numbers as at 1 November

Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2024 v 2025 Change	2024 v 2025 % Change
Motor Cruisers	5086	5110	5079	5083	5004	5237	5142	5049	4952	4887	-65	-1.31%
Auxiliary Yachts	1127	1132	1093	1107	965	1048	1024	966	904	884	-20	-2.21%
Day Launches	495	556	574	558	562	582	600	592	546	562	16	2.93%
Outboard Dinghies	962	1064	1060	1058	1051	1140	1185	1039	940	917	-23	-2.45%
Workboats	156	158	156	153	144	142	166	159	164	147	-17	-10.37%
Passenger Vessels SPB		22	21	23	13	19	20	22	21	22	1	4.76%
TOTAL MOTORBOATS:	**7826**	**8042**	**7983**	**7982**	**7739**	**8168**	**8137**	**7827**	**7527**	**7419**	**-108**	**-1.43%**
Sailing Craft	1107	1076	1081	1023	844	920	861	820	747	722	-25	-3.35%
Rowing Craft	1513	1483	1513	1545	1800	2039	2054	1874	1618	1516	-102	-6.30%
Houseboats	45	45	49	52	49	52	67	77	73	68	-5	-6.85%
TOTAL PRIVATE BOATS	**10491**	**10646**	**10626**	**10602**	**10432**	**11179**	**11119**	**10598**	**9965**	**9725**	**-240**	**-2.41%**

Table 3

Total Hire and Private Boat Numbers as at 1 November

Total	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2024 v 2025 Change	2024 v 2025 % Change
Grand Total	**11946**	**12124**	**12116**	**12071**	**11762**	**12639**	**12549**	**12206**	**11525**	**11202**	**-323**	**-2.80%**