

Navigation Committee

08 June 2023

Agenda item number 13

Progress report on charging at Ranworth moorings

Report by Head of Communications

Purpose

This report provides the Committee with an update on the policy of charging for mooring at Ranworth since the Broads Authority decision in January 2023 after consultation with the Committee.

Broads Plan context

Theme C: Maintaining and enhancing the navigation

Recommended decision

To note the report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. In January of this year, after consultation with the Navigation Committee, which was favourable to the idea, the Broads Authority resolved to introduce a £5-day rate and a £10 overnight charge at the site.
- 1.2. The introduction of a mooring charge for the Broads Authority moorings at Ranworth was long argued for by the late Charles Cator and his family, who currently charge £12 to moor on the island - where there are no facilities. The charge was introduced from 1 April 2023 and appears to have had the positive impact on the local economy that Charles Cator predicted. More boats can moor with the assistance of the Broads Authority's staff and more hire boats have been using the site. According to conversations between Authority officers and staff at the pub and the café/restaurant, both have seen a significant uplift in their trade. The Granary Restaurant is taking on an additional chef and trainee chef in response to demand.
- 1.3. The experience of introducing a modest charge for mooring at Ranworth has been encouraging. The fee structure has encouraged boats not intending to stay overnight to leave at 17:00hrs and increased the turnover of vessels at the site. Visitors have also been pleased to have help mooring from the members of staff.

- 1.4. For the period 1 April to 20 May, 1,627 mooring fees have been paid, producing an income of £9,787. Only 7 moored boats have been recorded as refusing to pay, all of which were privately owned, and 3 hire craft have left after being told of the charges, during this period.

2. Legal Implications

- 2.1. The consistent advice from NpLaw and Birketts is that the Authority can levy a mooring fee at this site. Although the number of private boat owners refusing to pay has been very small, further advice has been taken from Birketts on how to recover the mooring fee and the Authority's costs. Following consultation with the solicitors, new signage at the site informs the public of the terms for mooring (See Appendix 1) and a process developed for dealing with non-payers by issuing a penalty charge by way of a Mooring Contravention Notice (MCN). The MCN states that if the mooring charge of £5 or £10 is paid within 14 days, there is no further penalty. If the charge remains unpaid, there is a £60 penalty.
- 2.2. The basis of the penalty charge for non-payment is that the mooring is on private land (owned by the Authority). As landowner the BA is entitled to charge for use of the mooring. This is established by making the use of the quay subject to the unilateral acceptance of advertised contractual terms. The terms are advertised by being displayed on a sign visible to the boat user when mooring. Non-payment gives rise to a claim for breach of contract and / or damages for trespass. The courts have upheld the right for a penalty fee to be imposed for non-payment in these circumstances.
- 2.3. Authority staff provide a printed copy of the terms to anyone refusing to pay the appropriate mooring fee.

3. Financial implications

- 3.1. The introduction of charges at Ranworth will bring additional income into the Navigation budget. It also has implications on the allocation of Ranworth costs between National Park and Navigation.
- 3.2. Within the accounting policies in the statement of accounts (page 35) it states:
Allocation of costs
Salary, vehicle and other revenue costs are reallocated within the general expenditure to major projects that are grant aided partially or wholly by sources other than Defra grant. The method of allocation is kept as simple as possible and is either made on usage, such as number of hours spent on a project, or estimated on a percentage basis.
- 3.3. The Visitor Services Supervisor provided an estimate of how much income we hope to raise through the introduction of charges, and this was compared to the income the centre took from National Park sales. The calculation is as follows:

Income Source	National Park £	Navigation £	Consolidated £
National Park Sales from the TIC	15,500	0	15,500
Navigation Sales from mooring fees	0	40,000	40,000
Total Income	15,500	40,000	55,500
% split	28%	72%	100%

3.4. The running costs for centre (£3,000) remain relatively minor due to the Authority owning the premises. Most of the facility costs remain in staff time (£55,560). From observation to date, the majority of staff time is devoted to helping boaters moor up, taking their fees and providing them with information. The actual income and expenditure will be reviewed at the end of the financial year to check the % split based on evidence.

Author: Rob Leigh

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[Broads Plan](#) strategic objectives: C1, E1

Appendix 1 – Ranworth mooring sign designs

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24hr moorings

Maximum stay 24hrs - no return within 24hrs

In an emergency contact coastguard on 999 | Broads control 01603 756056

Broads Authority Navigation Byelaws 1995. Byelaw 61: It is an offence to moor for longer than the permitted period. Byelaw 66: It is an offence to prevent, obstruct or hinder the lawful mooring of any vessel.

Overnight £10 • Daytime £5 (10am-5pm)

Small boat dyke • £3 for powered vessels, daytime only

www.broads-authority.gov.uk

Notice to All Boats | Welcome to Ranworth Staithe – owned and operated by the Broads Authority

1.1 All are welcome to moor here. In doing so you are agreeing to enter a contract for mooring with the Broads Authority and to comply with its terms and conditions which are set out on this notice.

1.2 You are also agreeing to pay mooring charges of:

- £10 overnight (until 10am the following morning)
- £5 per day or any part thereof until 5pm
- £3 for powered vessel using the small boat dyke (daytime only)

Charges apply unless you have been notified by the Broads Authority that you or your craft is exempt.

Maximum mooring period of 24 hours – No return within 24 hours as per navigation byelaws 1995.

To make payment of the relevant charge, you should go to the Ranworth Visitor Centre upon arrival. If the Visitor Centre is closed when you arrive, payment should be made prior to your departure. Cash or card is acceptable. Your payment will contribute to the maintenance and operating costs of the site.

1.3 The Broads Authority assumes no liability for loss or damage and mooring is at your own risk.

1.4 We will process your data in accordance with Data Protection Principles and the legal basis is vested in us under the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 (as amended) along with the Vessel Registration Byelaws 1997. Your information will be used for performing these statutory functions and purposes. This includes the processing of your data for the good management of the navigation area.

1.5 Please be aware that failure to pay the mooring charge will be a breach of the Contract and will result in the issue of a Mooring Contravention Notice (MCN) incurring a penalty fine of £60 in addition to our recovery costs. Further details on how and when the fine can be paid, will be set out in the MCN.

For enquiries about this notice please email moorings@Broads-Authority.gov.uk or write to Broads Authority (moorings), Yare House, 62-64 Thorpe Road, Norwich, NR1 1RY.