

Broads Authority

24 July 2026

Agenda item number 25

Report on outside bodies - Whitlingham Charitable Trust 2025/26

Report by Matthew Bradbury

Purpose

To update the Authority on the activity of the BA appointed Trustees of Whitlingham Charitable Trust and the strategic priorities relating to the Environmental, Social and Economic Impact of Whitlingham Country Park.

Broads Plan context

Theme E: Promoting understanding and enjoyment

Theme F: Connecting and inspiring communities

Recommended decision

To note the report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. As per the Articles of the Whitlingham Charitable Trust (WCT) (Broads Authority being a Member), in 2023, the Authority [appointed four Trustees to the Board](#) of the charity – all of whom must act in the best interests of the Trust.
- 1.2. The Trustees are Tracey Brown; David Diggins and Matthew Bradbury.
- 1.3. Recruitment for a fourth Trustee was carried out during April and May 2026.

2. Priorities for Whitlingham Charitable Trust

- 2.1. In 2025/26, the priorities of the Trust (and therefore our involvement in its governance) have been:
 - **Improving the facilities of the park**
 - Biodiversity - Work to create scrapes has been completed. Five pedigree Highland Cattle have been purchased to graze the water meadows.
 - The addition of battery storage to the solar array is having a positive impact on sustainability and income.

- A 'mobile visitor centre' will be operational by the summer holidays. Built on a trailer, it will help enormously with visitor information and the visitor experience.
- Trowse Newton Hall repairs have been completed and will make them safe.
- Funding is still being sought for a boardwalk. Match funding for funding offered from Farming in Protected Landscapes is being sought.
- **Promote and deliver partnerships and programmes that improve Health and Wellbeing** – A wide range of cultural events and activities include guided walks, outdoor cinema, a yoga festival, an Easter Trail, running events, and corporate events. A second Tramper has been acquired, which will help satisfy the demand for facilitated accessibility.
- **Developing volunteering and education** – Whitlingham Country Park (WCP) has a growing number of regular volunteers (individuals and corporates) and continues to provide work experience and internships. Volunteers are actively being recruited.
Seven schools have booked for hire of Education Boxes.
- **Enhancing habitats enabling nature to flourish** – Cattle have returned to Trowse Water Meadow and new hedges have been planted. Dykes have been cleared and banks reseeded with wildflowers. The Green Flag award has been maintained in 2025/26, demonstrating the high quality of the park and its management.
- **Working with partners** –The relationships with The Arminghall Settlement, Broads Authority, Norfolk County Council, South Norfolk District Council, our tenants, funders and a large number of on-site and off site organisations and individuals remain key to the success of the park and the Trust.
- **Developing a sustainable operating model** – The Café, now run 'in-hand', has had another extremely successful year, providing gift aided income to the Trust. Fundraising continues to be successful offering opportunities to add value to the facilities and activities. The events programme is has continued to develop and income generating partnerships are proving to be successful.
- **Developing the team** – The incredibly dedicated and professional team continue to deliver beyond expectations. The team continues to expand and was recognised as finalists for the South Norfolk Broadland Business Awards.

3. Financial implications

- 3.1. None that we are aware of. As a result of pursuing a clear strategy and business plan WCT, and WCP, are in increasingly impactful and good financial health.

Author: Matthew Bradbury

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[Broads Plan](#) strategic objectives: Theme E: Promoting understanding and enjoyment; Theme F: Connecting and inspiring communities.