

Broads Local Access Forum

Minutes of the meeting held on 30 August 2023

Contents

1.	Appointment of Chair	2
2.	Appointment of Vice Chair	2
3.	Apologies for absence and welcome	2
4.	Declarations of interest	2
5.	Minutes of the Broads Local Access Forum meeting held on 7 June 2023	2
6.	Summary of actions and outstanding issues following decisions at previous meetings	2
	Lost paths in the Broads	2
	Staithe report	3
	Water quality monitoring	3
7.	Integrated Access Strategy Projects update	4
8.	Integrated Access Strategy - scoping paper	4
9.	Project update from Norfolk County Council	5
10.	Any other business	6
11.	Date of next meeting	6
	Appendix 1 – Declaration of interests Broads Local Access Forum, 30 August 2023	7

Present

Keith Bacon – in the Chair, Linda Aspland, Richard Atkins, Harry Blathwayt, Christine Cane, Tony Gibbons, Tim Harris, Duncan Holmes, David Lilley, Joe Mitchell, Steve Read, Deborah Wicks, Christopher Yardley.

In attendance

Dan Hoare – Head of Construction, Maintenance and Ecology, Kylie Moos – Administrative Officer, Martin Sullivan- Norfolk Local Access Forum.

1. Appointment of Chair

Keith Bacon was nominated for the position of Chair of the Broads Local Access Forum. There were no other nominations. Members voted unanimously to appoint Keith Bacon.

2. Appointment of Vice Chair

The Forum agreed that the appointment of Vice Chair was not required at this time. If the Chair is unable to attend a future meeting than an interim Vice Chair will be appointed for the duration of the meeting. Nominations for a Vice Chair will be opened again at the 2024 AGM.

3. Apologies for absence and welcome

The Chair welcomed five new members to the Forum: Duncan Holmes, Kate Leonard, David Lilley, Joe Mitchell, and Deborah Wicks.

Andrew Walters, Waterways and Recreation Officer for the Broads Authority has been seconded into a new role. A new Waterways and Recreation Officer will be starting on the 2 October 2023.

Following today's meeting there will be an optional boat trip on the Ra from Hoveton.

Apologies received from Peter Dixon, Kate Leonard.

4. Declarations of interest

Members indicated they had no further declarations of interest other than those already registered and set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

5. Minutes of the Broads Local Access Forum meeting held on 7 June 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

6. Summary of actions and outstanding issues following decisions at previous meetings

Lost paths in the Broads

The Chair reported that there was no response from Norfolk County Council Officers at the recent Norfolk Local Access Forum Rights of Way subgroup meeting. A Forum member suggested that the request was made on behalf of the Forum following discussions at today's meeting.

The Chair agreed to raise the request on behalf of the Forum at the next Norfolk Local Access Forum Rights of Way subgroup meeting.

Staithe report

The Chair noted that they are unlikely to receive a formal response on the Staithe report from the Environment Agency (EA). Dan Hoare suggested that the new Waterways and Recreation Officer compares the location of the staithe in the Broads with EA freehold land. This would identify staithe which are on EA owned land and could be at risk. The list of at risk staithe can then be presented to the EA for comment.

The new Waterways and Recreation Officer will compare staithe in the Broads which are on EA owned land.

Water quality monitoring

Dan Hoare confirmed that the Broads Authority website has been updated to include the risk of water borne diseases for paddle sports users and open water swimming.

Several Forum members would still like to see the Authority conduct its own water quality monitoring so that the data can be presented to the EA and Anglian Water. Forum members added that more should be done to mitigate the risk to splash sports users who are paying to enter the water through a toll or membership. Dan Hoare responded, the Authority voted in May 2023 to continue raising awareness and putting pressure on the water companies and the EA.

None of the National Parks in the UK undertake their own water quality monitoring. The monitoring remains with the EA, including National Parks which also have a large number of splash sports users such as the Lake District.

The Broads is so dynamic that it would be difficult to confirm that the water poses no risk of water borne diseases to splash sports users. The Chair added, any data that was collected could be used as a benchmark to present to the EA and water companies, and not to advise if the water is safe to enter.

Dan Hoare recommended inviting the River Waveney Trust to a future meeting to discuss the water quality monitoring taking place in Bungay as part of the application for inland bathing status.

The Forum agreed that the BA should be applying more pressure to the EA to increase water quality monitoring of Faecal Indicator Organisms in the Broads. The Forum requested that the Authority formally contacts the EA with three months to respond.

The Chair agreed to send a letter to the Director of Strategic Services sharing the views of the Forum.

7. Integrated Access Strategy Projects update

Dan Hoare introduced the report which provided an update on some of the strategic priority projects. The following additional updates were provided at the meeting.

- The Water, Mills and Marshes (WMM) programme is coming to an end in December 2023. Dan Hoare recommended inviting WMM to a future Forum meeting to present the final outcomes.
- Project costs have increased for the Wherryman's Way project. At Hardley Flood there are three major ecological considerations. A Forum member questioned if ecological requirements should be overruling public rights of way and access. Dan Hoare responded, the ecological considerations are being reviewed by Norfolk County Council.
- The designs have been submitted for the Bramerton FP5 stretch of the Wherryman's way.
- Hoveton Riverside Park project has been delayed due to an increase in costs.
- The restoration of Gillingham FP14 is now complete.
- Tony Gibbon has been in discussions with the EA regarding the permissive path Coldharbour to Womack Water. Dan Hoare agreed for the new Waterways and Recreation Officer to contact Tony Gibbon to discuss further once in post.
- A cycle shelter is due to be installed at Acle Bridge.

Dan Hoare agreed to invite WMM to a future Forum meeting to present the final outcomes of the WMM programme.

The new Waterways and Recreation Officer will contact Tony Gibbons regarding the permissive path from Coldharbour to Womack Water.

8. Integrated Access Strategy - scoping paper

Dan Hoare introduced the report which provided an interim update on the Stage one consultation of the refreshed Integrated Access Strategy. The following additional updates were provided at the meeting.

- When funding bids are put together, they should include the benefits to public health.
- Landscape preservation such as removing trees from the riverbanks were included in some of the responses. These responses will be discussed further at the next Navigation Committee meeting.
- There is an increased focus on sustainable travel compared to the consultation in 2019 for the Integrated Access Strategy.

Comments and answers to questions

- The pressures of sensitive sites as referenced in aim 6.1.7 should not only consider the ecological pressure but also other constraints such as parking, littering and general site management impacts on sites where people congregate.
- The Authority needs to apply pressures to the Highways team to make sure that existing rights of way are maintained. The Chair recommended that the Authority produces a list of key places where the maintenance is essential and that it is shared with the Highways team.
- Martin Sullivan asked if Parish Councils are being asked to carry out any maintenance as they may be eligible for funding from Norfolk County Council. Martin Sullivan agreed to share further information on this funding with Forum members.
- Parking for those towing boat trailers would be appreciated.
- Double alongside mooring in aim 6.3.6 in practise is not always suitable for all. Dan Hoare added that Rangers follow a process to identify the sites which are suitable. Mooring posts are then reinforced at these sites, to cope with the additional loads.

9. Project update from Norfolk County Council

Matt Hayward provided updates for cycling and walking projects at Norfolk County Council (NCC).

St George Street pedestrian bridge on the Wensum

Designs and budgets are currently being reviewed, a decision on the next steps is due by the end of September and will be reported back to the CIL board.

Hardley Flood footpath

Funding has been confirmed through the CIL board for the first two bridges which will allow access to the bird hide, NCC are progressing with the planning documentation for these works and also reviewing funding opportunities for the additional two bridge repairs needed which are being considered for phase two of the project.

Wherrymans Way project updates

The Broads are leading on the Bramerton riverbank repairs, NCC are planning to receive the planning application for these works in the autumn.

LCWIP consultation and update

The Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan (LCWIP) consultation has completed and NCC are currently reviewing the feedback in preparing to an updated report into the Infrastructure and Development committee, this is due by the end of the year. Additional details and updates will be added to www.norfolk.gov.uk/activetravel

Green Infrastructure plans

The Greater Norwich Green Infrastructure Strategy is currently being updated following the consultation between May and June, details are available online at [Greater Norwich Green Infrastructure Strategy Consultation » Greater Norwich Growth Board](#). This is due to be completed by the end of the year.

Standard PRow maintenance

Dan Hoare reported that there has been a noticeable amount of negative feedback from stakeholders and public on the non-National Trail PRowS in the Broads being particularly undermanaged this year.

The NCC Highways Team responded, due to the wet and warm weather there has been more growth than normal however the cuts are currently taking place across the network. Specific issues can be reported on the following website: <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads/report-a-problem> which ensures it gets to the correct person and also allows the user to be kept updated on developments.

The Forum noted the updates and would like to see an Officer from NCC attend a future meeting.

10. Any other business

A Forum member reported that they had attended the Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan consultation meeting for Wroxham and were disappointed with the plans. The proposal was a walking and cycling route through the main road through Wroxham and Hoveton which was disappointing to see.

Duncan Holmes advised that they would like to present an item on anti social behaviour at Postwick and Buckenham Marsh at the next meeting. These areas are being used by a different type of user which may impact the access in the Broads. The Chair encouraged all member of the Forum to bring forward items for discussion at future meetings.

Potter Heigham bridge has reopened to motorised traffic again. Norfolk County Council are no longer considering permanent pedestrianisation of the bridge.

Pathmakers has received funding for Walk Norfolk 2023 and 2024. Pathmakers is seeking trustees to the charity, more information can be found on the following website: <https://pathmakers.org.uk/>

11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Broads Local Access Forum would be held on Wednesday 29 November 2023 at 10.00am.

The meeting ended at 3.35pm.

Signed by

Chair

Appendix 1 – Declaration of interests Broads Local Access Forum, 30 August 2023

Member	Agenda/minute	Nature of interest