

Broads Local Access Forum

Minutes of the meeting held on 02 December 2020

Contents

| | | |
|----|---|---|
| 1. | Apologies for absence and welcome | 3 |
| 2. | Declarations of interest | 3 |
| 3. | Minutes of the Broads Local Access Forum meeting held on 2 September 2020 | 3 |
| 4. | Matters arising from the minutes | 3 |
| | Wherryman's Way access | 3 |
| | Integrated Access Strategy projects framework | 3 |
| | River Wensum Strategy | 3 |
| | Carlton Marshes Nature Reserve | 3 |
| | Wayford Bridge | 4 |
| 5. | Integrated Access Strategy: Update | 4 |
| | Reedham Permissive Path | 4 |
| | Broads mills trails | 4 |
| | Bure Valley Path | 4 |
| | Wherryman's Way | 4 |
| | Hoveton Riverside Park | 4 |
| | GIS Recreation maps | 5 |
| | Discovery Hubs | 5 |
| | River Wensum missing link | 5 |
| 6. | Opening access to EA owned banks | 5 |
| | Stretch one - River Thurne from Coldharbour Farm to Womack Dyke | 5 |
| | Stretch two- River Thurne upstream of Potter Heigham road bridge | 5 |
| | Stretch three - River Ant from Ludham Bridge to Johnson Street | 5 |
| 7. | EXPERIENCE Cycle Hubs project | 6 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Cycle Hubs | 6 |
| Hoveton and Wroxham | 7 |
| Cycle Friendly tourism | 7 |
| 8. Updates from interest group representatives | 7 |
| 9. Any other business | 8 |
| 10. Date of next meeting | 8 |
| Appendix 1 – Declaration of interests Broads Local Access Forum, 02 December 2020 | 10 |

Present

Keith Bacon – in the Chair, Kelvin Allen, Linda Aspland, Harry Blathwayt, Louis Baugh, Robin Buxton, Mike Flett, Tony Gibbons, Dawn Hatton, Tim Harris, John Murray, Stephen Read, Christopher Yardley.

In attendance

Dan Hoare – Head of Construction, Maintenance and Environment, Kylie Moos – Administrative Officer, Lewis Treloar – Waterways and Recreation Officer, Andrea Auburn – Cycling UK, Ken Hawkins – Norfolk Local Access Forum, Martin Sullivan – Norfolk Local Access Forum.

1. Apologies for absence and welcome

Apologies received from Peter Mason

2. 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.

3. Minutes of the Broads Local Access Forum meeting held on 2 September 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

Wherryman's Way access

Norfolk Trails confirmed that access to the Wherryman's Way near the Beauchamp Arms is now open.

Integrated Access Strategy projects framework

Lewis Treloar had arranged for an additional meeting to be held with Broads Local Access Forum members on 30 November 2020 to discuss the IAS prioritisation scoring matrix.

River Wensum Strategy

An invite will be sent to the Forum for a representative once the River Wensum Strategy delivery group recommences. Meetings are not being held as frequently due to Covid-19.

Carlton Marshes Nature Reserve

Steve Read noted that the following text from minutes of the Broads Local Access Forum meeting held on 2 September 2020 for item 4; Carlton Marshes Cycle Route "However, the landowner at Carlton Marshes has not agreed to any changes in the path, so meeting this current ambition is doubtful" gives the impression that the Broads Authority is giving up on trying to achieve a cycle route across Carlton Marshes. The minutes should state that the

Broads Authority will actively continue to try to find a solution. Lewis Treloar confirmed that this is an accurate account of the minutes and the Broads Authority will continue to look for a solution, however there has been no response from the landowner to the letters and emails sent.

East Suffolk District Council have asked for recommendations on cycling and walking routes within the area as part of the East Suffolk Cycling and Walking Strategy. The consultation will close on 7 December 2020.

Wayford Bridge

Norfolk Highways have agreed that there will be no road or navigation closures when the bridge deck is re-waterproofed. A two-way traffic light system will operate on the road once work commences.

5. Integrated Access Strategy: Update

Lewis Treloar provided an update on the highest strategic priority projects identified for delivery by a range of partners as part of the Integrated Access Strategy (IAS).

Reedham Permissive Path

The path is now complete and open. Reedham Parish Council organised a local press release for the opening 3 weeks ago. Reedham footpath one has also reopened.

Broads mills trails

Water Mills and Marshes (WMM) are proceeding with the projects and looking to open up new routes in Halvergate Marshes.

Bure Valley Path

Norfolk County Council and Broadland District Council have signed a partnership agreement to collaborate on green infrastructure projects. The Bure Valley Path has been identified as a key strategic route and improvements including the crossing the road at Aylsham are being included in the feasibility study. This has been partially funded as part of the EXPERIENCE project and will be completed by 2023.

Wherryman's Way

A funding application was submitted for a CIL bid to pay for works within the project. The application was declined and Lewis Treloar is awaiting feedback on the decision. The dredge programme and restoring the footpath at Hardley flood is being reviewed as to if this can still go ahead to the same specification. The delay will affect the proposed bank stabilisation project at Surlingham and Bramerton.

Hoveton Riverside Park

Delayed due to funding application being declined. Work is still progressing with the topographic survey and designs for the playpark and other elements are being drawn up. Drawings are likely to be in place early 2021.

GIS Recreation maps

Slipways and launching points online map are nearing completion subject to the last few data agreements.

Discovery Hubs

The Broads Authority have submitted an initial application on behalf of the Broads Charitable Trust for one of their Discovery Hubs.

River Wensum missing link

Norfolk County Council are procuring feasibility and design work on a new structure on the southern side of the Wensum, between St George Street and Duke Street, to complete the River Wensum riverside walk between Norwich train station and Hellesdon. The project has been presented to the Broads Navigation Committee and River Wensum Strategy group for feedback on the initial design.

6. Opening access to EA owned banks

Tony Gibbons presented to the Forum three projects to improve access to a number of river banks under Environment Agency (EA) control to make them more presentable and an asset to the Broads. Additionally, the project proposals also fall under the Broads Angling Services Group (BASG) objectives.

Over the last few years there has been a downturn in availability of river banks that offer access for fishing, in most cases this is down to a lack of maintenance. All three areas selected have parking and an access point to walk through. The maintenance work involved could be completed ahead of the next fishing season and will require the least amount of work to bring back to full usage.

Stretch one - River Thurne from Coldharbour Farm to Womack Dyke

This stretch was previously well used by anglers, with parking and a pathway on the flood bank when it has been cleared of vegetation. The current state of the river bank is overgrown, and not maintained, restricting access to anglers. The only area that was cleared by Norwich and District Anglers Association (NDAA) at the quay heading is now regularly full with moored boats.

Stretch two- River Thurne upstream of Potter Heigham road bridge

This stretch already has 10 established angling platforms which are well used. Banks between the Riverside Bungalows have become overgrown and have been used for dumping rubbish. The gaps could accommodate a further 12 angling stations, once the banks have been cleared, and will allow walkers views of the river. With minimum effort, this stretch could be brought back for full usage by June 16th 2021.

Stretch three - River Ant from Ludham Bridge to Johnson Street

In the past this stretch has been used for match fishing with a maintained pathway along the whole stretch. The bank has had little use over the past few years due to it being inaccessible.

This stretch would take more work than the previous two projects lengths but with its history, it would soon attract anglers back to the area.

Comments and answers to questions

- The public footpath that runs on top of the flood wall in stretch three is a public right of way. Norfolk County Council have an obligation to maintain this. Access to the river (Ant) from the flood bank path is currently very soft mud which could be hazardous at times.
- The Broads Authority does cut the section between Ludham Bridge and How Hill. The flood bank with the public right of way on it isn't immediately adjacent to the river, since the BESL works and the double soak dyke were completed.
- There has been no sign of a path to walk beyond Womack Dyke.
- The BESL contract has been extended for another two years, however there is uncertainty if this includes annual cutting of floodbanks which previously took place.
- NLAF offered to support approaching landowners to discuss permissive paths for the Coldharbour Farm to Womack Dyke stretch if required.
- Post BESL works there is concern of the safety of pedestrian access from the top of the floodbanks to the water edge of the rivers. Depending on the location, river banks may have been strengthened or rolled back with a reeded run formed as a soft defence which will be wet and vegetated, unsuitable for access.
- The next steps would involve site visits by the proposer to the riverbanks to complete a feasibility study of the projects and time scale in which they could be delivered and by whom. The update would be provided at a future meeting.

The Forum agreed to support the feasibility and receive an update at the next meeting.

7. EXPERIENCE Cycle Hubs project

Andrea Auburn, Project Manager for Cycling UK presented to the Forum the EXPERIENCE Cycle Hubs project. EXPERIENCE is a sustainable tourism project aimed at increasing the number of visitors or tourists between October and March, boosting local economies and year round jobs. Norfolk County Council (NCC) is the lead partner, working with 13 other organisations across 6 pilot regions in France and England.

Cycle Hubs

Cycling UK and NCC are collaborating with local delivery partners to develop five new Cycle Hubs. The new Cycle Hubs will combine varied cycle routes with Cycle Friendly places to sleep, eat and relax. The destinations will boost visitor numbers, increase length of stay, and increase spend in local businesses.

The Cycle Hub also aligns to NCC strategic priorities of increasing active travel and improving the Green Infrastructure Network across Norfolk.

Hoveton and Wroxham

Hoveton and Wroxham has been selected as a pilot Cycle Hub, due to it being seen as the capital of the Broads and a honeypot site when it comes to attracting visitors. Businesses in the area have wanted to operate all year round but have not yet harnessed the year round offer of experiential tourism.

The Cycle Hub would complement plans to update the Bure Valley Path and is well situated for arrival by bike and/or train, which promotes a sustainable travel option.

Cycle Friendly tourism

New 2 year accreditation programme 'Cycle Friendly Places' will train and support hospitality and accommodation businesses to offer an excellent customer experience, to attract and accommodate cyclists.

Launching early next year businesses can complete the online self-assessment for free. Assessments will be based on the quality facilities (such as bike racks, lockers and access to tools), welcome, and information for cycling customers (such as knowledge of local routes and bike hire).

Comments and answers to questions

- 3 pilot areas in the UK include Norfolk, Kent and Cornwall which typically only attract tourists in the summer. Introducing experiential tourism may combat this and increase tourism in the shoulder season from October to March.
- Ken Hawkins agreed to take the project to a future Norfolk Local Access Forum meeting.
- Harry Blathwayt agreed to update North Norfolk District Council on the Cycle Hub project.
- Installing a Cycle Hub in Hoveton and Wroxham would also generate some interest in the Three Rivers Way.
- The Forum has previously discussed a cycle route between Oulton Broad and Norwich using two ferry crossings at Reedham and the Waveney River Centre. This would be a good example of multi-modal transport within the Broads.

8. Updates from interest group representatives

There are a number of boats moored at the south end of Oulton Broad near Nicholas Everitt park which are in a dilapidated state with domestic possessions left on the footpath creating an intimidating environment for visitors.

Lewis Treloar agreed to contact the local ranger to investigate further and speak to Oulton Parish Council regarding the moorings.

At the last Broads Authority meeting it was agreed an additional 4 rangers would be employed for the summer months to alleviate some of the pressures both on and off the water.

Martin Sullivan reminded the Forum that Pathmakers are still looking for a member of the Broads Local Access Forum to join as a trustee. The Burgh Castle path and boardwalk is an example of some of the work carried out by Pathmakers.

Access to the water by the two Rights of Way that converge at Smallburgh and go down to Moy's Mill have been closed off.

Lewis Treloar agreed to investigate the footpaths and access.

9. Any other business

Ellie Hackwoods report; Widening the reach of the Norfolk Local Access Forum noted that the Countryside Stewardship expires in 2020 leading to reductions in public access. At a previous Forum meeting Norfolk FWAG presented the potential permissive paths that may be lost in the Broads when the Countryside Stewardship expires.

Lewis Treloar agreed to investigate which permissive paths may be lost in the Broads.

The recent announcement of the Agricultural Transition Plan was announced this week; however, the full details on access have not yet been provided. The Forum will receive updates at a future meeting.

Following on from the additional meeting for IAS prioritisation scoring matrix this week a further sub group meeting would be required to discuss the current list of projects in detail. An agenda item on the wording for the seven strategic priorities would be presented at the next Broads Local Access Forum meeting.

The Chair and Vice Chair will be elected at the next Forum meeting. Advertising for additional members to join the Broads Local Access Forum will begin next year.

10. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Broads Local Access Forum would be held on Wednesday 10 March at 2.00pm.

The meeting ended at 15.45.

Signed by

Chairman

Summary of progress

| Outstanding actions | Meeting date | Assigned to |
|--|---------------------|--------------------|
| Contact the local rangers and Oulton Parish Council regarding the moorings. | 04/12/2020 | Lewis Treloar |
| Investigate the footpaths and access towards Moy's Mill. | 04/12/2020 | Lewis Treloar |
| Investigate which permissive paths may be lost in the Broads when the Countryside Stewardship expires. | 04/12/2020 | Lewis Treloar |
| Contact the Environment Agency asking their opinion as a follow-up from the publication of the staithe report. | 04/12/2019 | BLAF Chair |

| Completed actions | Meeting date | Assigned to |
|--|---------------------|--------------------|
| Contact Norfolk Trails to discuss access of the Wherryman's Way near The Beauchamp Arms. | 02/09/2020 | Lewis Treloar |
| Circulate the IAS projects table for Forum members to review and feedback. | 02/09/2020 | Lewis Treloar |
| Circulate NLA survey report. | 02/09/2020 | Lewis Treloar |

